











LIFE AND TEACHINGS
OF
"ZOROASTER"
THE GREAT PERSIAN

BY
LOREN HARPER WHITNEY
OF THE CHICAGO BAR
AUTHOR OF
"A QUESTION OF MIRACLES"

PARALLELS IN
THE LIVES OF BUDDHA AND JESUS

THIS WORK ALSO INCLUDES A COMPARISON OF THE PERSIAN AND HEBREW RELIGIONS SHOWING THAT "THE WORD OF THE LORD" CAME TO THE HEBREWS BY WAY OF PERSIA

PART SECOND
OFFERS PROOF THAT THE JEWS COPIED HEAVILY FROM THE HINDU BIBLE

SECOND EDITION

Arranged for publication in its present form by Dr. L. W. de Laurence, who is now sole owner of this wonderful work, the same to now serve as "TEXT BOOK" NUMBER THREE for THE CONGRESS OF ANCIENT, DIVINE, MENTAL and CHRISTIAN MASTERS.

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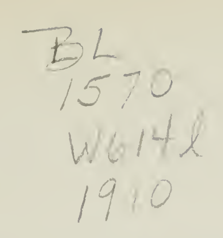


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INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

§ 1. For more than three thousand years the name of Zoroaster has been known in the world. Yet, during the middle ages Europe was under such a cloud that his name and his precepts faded, almost, from the memory of man. It was known that Persia, until the battle of Marathon (490 B. C.) was master of Western Asia, and the doctrines of Zoroaster were dominant in her realm. But Persia, even as late as three hundred years ago, was, to Europe, almost a sealed book. With the revival of learning, however, inquiry began to be made into her ancient doctrines and their author.

Early Greek and Roman writers had made frequent mention of Zoroaster's name, and this stimulated later scholars to know more of him. Travelers in the far East were not then as numerous as to-day; but they kept bringing back word concerning the Persian Holy Book, the Avesta,[1] and, finally, some two hundred years ago, Thomas Hyde, an Englishman, and an Oxford professor and oriental scholar, undertook to write a history of the Persian religion. His materials to draw from were scanty, though he at once discovered, to his amazement, the striking analogies and parallels, existing between

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[1] The Avesta is the Holy Book, the Bible of the Iranian or Persian religion. It is called the Zend Avesta. The prefix "Zend" seems to have improperly crept into use in Europe. The translations are called "Zend Aves-

Zoroaster's Bible and the Jewish Bible. But he got the "cart before the horse" in stating that the great Iranian drank his inspiration from a Jewish fountain. We now know, to an absolute certainty, the exact reverse of this to be true. Hyde thought the exiled Jews, in Babylon, had carried their religion with them, and that Zoroaster learned from them. How could this be, for the Persian lived and taught many centuries before the captivity? [2] We shall find overwhelming proof of this farther on.

§ 2. In the year 1754, Anquetil Du Perron, a young Frenchman, then only twenty-four years old, a student of oriental languages, in Paris, chanced one day upon a fragment of the Persian Bible, the "Avesta." He had not the means to transport himself to Persia, but he was determined to possess the whole work, and also to learn its language; that he might translate it into his own mother tongue. Impatient to get away, he enlisted in the French East India Company, as a private soldier, and marched with his command through mud and rain to the port, whence the fleet was to sail. Here he learned that his government, impressed with his great zeal in the matter, had ordered his discharge and given him a small stipend. England and France were then at war, and there were many delays; so that he did not set sail until

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ta." The word "Zend" is not the name of an exact language; it is at most only a dialect of sanscrit. The words "Avistak va Zend" mean Avesta and translation.

I shall omit the word "Zend" and use only "Avesta," meaning thereby the Holy Book, or Bible, of the Iranians, and after them the Persians.

[2] The Jews were carried as slaves, into Babylon, by Nebuchadnezzar, about 597 years B. C.

February, 1755. On reaching India he found the whole country in an uproar, by reason of the war, and added to this, he suffered a long spell of sickness. On recovering he renewed, with tireless patience, his great self-imposed task. On foot and on horseback he traveled throughout Hindustan, meeting endless dangers and adventures. To a mind less resolute, or less on fire with a sublime purpose, these discouragements would have been fatal. After three years of wandering, struggles and dangers, he reached Surat, where he found a community of Persis, and their priests. Here commenced another struggle, not dangerous, but not less disheartening.

The priests were unfriendly; they were neither willing to part with their books, or their knowledge. They did not want to teach him the language of the Avesta. But he persevered and waited, and waited and persevered, until, at the end of three years more, he won a victory; not as memorable as Arbela or Waterloo, but one requiring equal courage and fortitude. They not only taught him their language, but they gave him one hundred and eighty manuscripts of the Avesta, which he brought back in safety to Paris, and in 1771 published the first European translation thereof.

It was, at once, assailed as a silly, modern affair, with stories about demons and angels. There were the names of trees and plants unknown; for who in Europe had ever heard of Homjuice or the Bareshnum ceremony, of gnomes, and the Kinvad Bridge? Here was a cosmogony of the world, and how did Zoroaster and those Iranians [3]

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[3] Persia or Iran, Persians and Iranians I shall use as meaning the same. The word Iran, at one time, meant

know about that? Besides, the Avesta conflicted with Genesis, and that could not be allowed. But Du Perron and his work found sturdy defenders, as well as fierce assailants. The battle for and against the Avesta, among scholars, raged in Europe for many years; Sir William Jones, leading the forces against it, and Elenker, a professor in the University of Riga, who at once published, in German, a translation thereof, defending it. But the more this old forgotten book was studied; the more sunlight let in, the more certain it became that here was a long lost monument of a great people, and a great faith. Jones, himself, after twenty years of opposition, coming tardily around to believe in it.

The Avesta has now been under the fire and cross-fire of critics for one hundred and thirty years.

The question, after all this lapse of time and patient research concerning this book, which the Iranians, and, after them, the Persians, call Holy, is as permanently settled, that it was composed by Zoroaster and his immediate followers, as that the Jewish prophets composed the works ascribed to them. Such scholars as "Max Müller, Roth, Westengard, Duncker, Professor Geldner, Spiegel, Dr. Haug, Bunsen, Burnouf, Lassen and Rhode, all agree that there is not the least doubt that the Avesta contains the books ascribed in the most ancient times to Zoroaster." They possess all the inward and outward

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more than Persia proper. Persis, originally, embraced only that strip on the eastern side of the Persian Gulf. They were called Pars—later Persians. Iran and Aryan once meant about the same. Arya and Aryana, of the Avesta, are the same.

marks of the highest antiquity, and only prejudice or ignorance can doubt it.[4]

§ 3. As Professor Hyde found many analogies and parallels between the Persian and Jewish Bibles, I will here mention a few, that the reader may catch a glimpse of this book, in the pages to follow. A statement that the Jewish prophets drew their inspiration largely from the Persian Bible, will no doubt be controverted. But it was "*after the return* of the Jews from Babylon that the devil and demons in conflict with man became a part of the company of spiritual beings, in the Jewish mythology. Angels there were before, as Messengers of God, but *devils there were not;* for until then an absolute Providence ruled the world. Satan, in Job, is an angel of God, doing a low kind of work—a fault-finder, but no devil. He is critical, looking after the flaws of the saints, but still no devil. After the *captivity,* the horizon of the Jewish mind enlarged, and it took in the conception of God; as allowing freedom to man and angels; thus permitting bad, as well as good, to have its way.

Then came in also the conception of a *future life* and resurrection for ultimate judgment. These doctrines have been supposed, with good reason, to have *come to the Jews,* from the influence of the Great System of Zoroaster.[5]

The Jewish prophets, however, carefully concealed, or at least did not mention the fact that "The word of the Lord" came to them by *way of Persia,* for not until the

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[4] Quoted from Rhode; but the others are equally firm in their statements. If I err I am in splendid company.

[5] J. F. Clark's 10 great religions, vol. 1, p. 205.

exile in Babylon, where they came in contact with Persian thought, do any of the Prophets mention that "The word of the Lord" came to them. The two religions, after the captivity, travel oftentimes, nearly the same road.

The Persians claimed to be a favored race; and, to all appearances, Ahura-Mazda (God)[6] had approved them, and exalted them, at that period, far above the Hebrews. The latter were hewers of wood and drawers of water; in fact slaves, in the worst sense, to their conquerors, the Persians. The Jews also claimed to be a favored people, and while it is true that they captured Ai, and leveled the walls of Jericho,[7] and prevailed against the Midianites, yet to-day they have no place on the map of the world. Persia herself, afterward, came under the yoke, and yet it would seem that she has always been more highly favored than those Jewish wanderers.

§ 4. The Persians and the Jews, each undertook in their Bibles, to give the cosmogony of the world. The Avesta mentions sixteen good lands or countries which Ahura-Mazda created; and that Angra-Mainyu (the Devil) thereupon counter-created the serpent and sin

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[6] This compound word was subsequently abridged to Ormazd, sometimes Ahura or Mazda is used, meaning God.

[7] I have never yet been able to bring myself to believe that the tooting of a ram's horn caused the walls of Jericho to fall down flat (Joshua, ch. 6), nor do I believe, as stated in the Avesta, that part of the waters of a river were made to stand still, and part to flow forward so as to leave a dry passage for Vistauru. See Aban Yast, § 76 to § 78. Both of these Bible stories are improbable.

(Vend. ch. 1), unbelief and tears and wailings, and sorcery and winter (Vend., ch. 1.).

In the Jewish Bible when God creates the heavens and the earth, the serpent is on hand, but there is no mention of winter. In the Avesta, the ancestry of the human race are Mashya and Mashyoi, and they sprout up from earth, as we shall hereafter see.[8] The word Mashya means "man." In Genesis we have Adam and Eve. The word Adam means "man." The Avesta gives the Lord *six great periods* in which to create the world; Genesis hurries him through in six days, but gives him a rest on the seventh. The compiler of Genesis says the Lord "sanctified" the seventh day, but Babylon had sanctified it *long before that,* and called it "Sulum," meaning "rest."[9] In fact, the Babylonians had "sanctified" it so thoroughly that they would not even allow their King to take a drive in his chariot, on their sanctified "Sulum." In both Bibles, man is the last animal created. Neither Bible was written by any one man; nor was either produced in any one age. In fact the Jewish Bible, if its chronology be correct (?) covers the long period of nearly seventeen hundred years, and Moses is the chief figure in its early pages. The chronology of the Avesta is still more deficient; in truth it can only be tentatively fixed by outside events. But it is certain that no one age or century saw its completion; yet Zoroaster towers on every page. In the Jewish Bible we have the old Hebrew tongue; later the Aramaic. The modern Greek does not understand the Greek of Demosthenes; nor is the language of Chaucer,

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[8] Ch. 2, Sec. 1.

[9] Br. Ency. Tit. Babylonia, Vol. 3, p. 191.

that of Tennyson. The older Avesta, is the language of ancient Iran,—a language so far back that no certain date can be fixed for it. The Pahlavi bears about the same relation to it that Aramaic does to Hebrew.

§ 5. In both Bibles the human race (except a few) is to be destroyed. A great cataclysm of waters is to overwhelm and drown the world, according to Genesis. In the Avesta mankind is to be exterminated by the deadly frosts of winter. In the Jewish Bible we are told that it "Grieved the Lord at his heart" and that he "repented" that He had made man,[10] and would destroy him because every imagination of his heart was only evil continually. The Avesta tells us[11] that the earth had become so full of flocks and herds, of men and dogs, and birds, that there was no room for more and hence (except a few) they must be destroyed.

The Lord directs Noah to build an Ark, the length to be 300 cubits, and the breadth 50 cubits; the height thereof 30 cubits.[12] Of clean beasts of the field and fowls, Noah was directed to take into the Ark by sevens; but of those not clean, by twos—male and female. And Noah and his family went into the Ark, and the beasts and fowls of the air, and everything that creepeth on the earth. We are

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[10] Gen., ch. 6.

[11] According to ch. 2, Vendidad, Yima had made the earth grow larger several times because it had become too populous.

[12] The Hebrew cubit was a little over 21 inches; the ark was, if we make generous allowance, about 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 3 stories, with *one* window, with a door for each story. The window was only one cubit, or 21½ inches square.

not told how the slow-footed sloth of South America got there. But if the world was only created about 2000 years before the flood, then the sloth must have started some five or six hundred years before its creation, in order to be on hand in time to be saved; for "all flesh died that moved upon the earth; all in whose nostrils was the breath of life";[13] save only Noah, and those in the Ark with him. The waters, we are told, prevailed upon the earth one-hundred-and-fifty days. And as we are asked to believe this fabulous story, let us examine it. In the first place, the Ark[14] is too small to contain one-tenth of the animals, and their food, for one-hundred-and-fifty days. How many sheep and goats and oxen would the carnivorous animals require for food in that time? The hay and the grain, for the herbivorous animals, where did Noah get it? But suppose that trouble be tided over, and the animals all came forth from the Ark, what then? Would not the lions and the tigers, the wolves and the hyenas, the jaguars and the leopards, and the other carnivora instantly pounce upon the sheep and the goats, and the cattle, and exterminate them? If they killed one of either sex, it would be the same as if both were destroyed. Even if the cattle and the sheep escaped the teeth of the flesh-eaters, they would soon perish with hunger, for all grass and herbage of every kind would be utterly destroyed in one-hundred-and-fifty days. But if we believe the record, it was not until the eighth month that even the *tops* of the *mountains* could be seen, and it was nearly

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[13] Gen., ch. 7.

[14] The word *Ark* properly translated means box. It should be Noah's box.

a year before Noah and the animals went forth.[15] Noah himself, by reason of his long tossing on the deep, must have become somewhat demoralized; for in celebrating the fruitage of his vineyard, "he drank of the wine and was drunken; and he was uncovered in his tent." Some enquiring mind might ask if Noah possessed the ability to construct a boat 450 feet long and 75 feet wide, and three stories, why was it that he did not build a *house* instead of living in a mere tent?

§ 6. In the Persian Bible, Yima, the son of Vivanghat, "at a meeting of the best of Mortals", is told by Ahura that a deadly frost and evil winters are about to fall upon the world, and that deep snow will cover the earth, even to the mountain tops. That he, Yima, must make a vara (an underground abode) to shelter man and animals, lest they all perish. As with Noah, the Lord gives particular directions. The vara must be two hathras[16] long on every side, and a great stream of water must be made to flow through it, one hathra long, to quench the thirst of man and beast. Thither Yima must bring sheep and oxen, dogs and birds; and dwelling places must be fixed for man, and food provided for all. Before that awful winter, Yima is told that the earth shall bear plenty of grass for cattle. He is not restricted, like Noah, to *one family;* but is told to bring the greatest, best, and finest specimens of men and women on earth: and the finest cattle of every kind, and the choicest seeds

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[15] Gen. ch. 8.

[16] A hathra is about 1 mile; the vara, therefore, would be two miles square, more than one hundred times larger than the Ark.

of every kind of fruit. From all these the earth is to be replenished. But no hunchbacks, no impotent, or lunatic or malicious one, or liar; no spiteful one, or leprous, or jealous one, should he bring into the vara.[17] He was told to make streets in this underground abode, and a door and a window. (Noah had one window.) Yima could not understand how a window would be of service in this subterranean retreat, and is told that there are *created* lights, and uncreated lights. That the only thing missed there will be the sight of the sun, moon and stars. But as a compensation for this, men will live such happy lives that a year will seem only as a day. Streets are to be constructed in this subterranean abode; and in one of the longest of them a thousand men and women are to be brought; in another, six hundred men and women; and in another three hundred.[18] And that window, self-shining within, will give them light sufficient to make it seem an eternal day. Avarice will not be there; and gluttony will be so far overcome that ten men can feed upon one loaf and be filled. With all these instructions Yima was at a loss to know with what material to construct so vast a place; and was told to "crush the earth with his heel, and knead it with his hands as a potter kneads his clay."

The Avesta is silent as to the exact time of exit from the vara; but they dwelt there in blissful peace for years, and until a *bird* was sent from heaven bearing the religion of Mazda to its occupants.[19]

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[17] Vendidad, ch. 2.

[18] Fargard, 2 vend., § 30. See also § 32 id.

[19] We must not be shocked that they have birds in

§ 7. Concerning these two supposed destructions of life, that of the Noachian deluge was, as it appears, compiled with almost literal exactness from two old Babylonian records, and those records are made up from worn out old legends.

The first is that of Berosus, and is as follows:[20] Xisuthrus, the tenth King of Babylon, noted for his piety, was warned *in a dream*,[21] of a coming great deluge, to prepare an Ark, thus to save his family and friends. The Ark is prepared; they embark, and the deluge comes. When the waters begin to subside, Xisuthrus, at three different times, sends out doves, the same as did Noah afterwards. The Ark rested on a mountain, after which those in the Ark disembark, and Xisuthrus builds an altar, and offers sacrifice. Thereupon he and his companions all mysteriously disappear. Perhaps they were translated like Enoch.[22] This flood story seems to have drifted even to the Ganges. For Manu, who is called the Father of Mankind, escapes from a deluge by building an Ark.

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the Iranian heaven, for in the Jewish heaven they have lions and horses and birds, and locusts—plenty of them. See Revelation.

[20] Berosus was a Chaldean priest and historian, living in the time of Alexander the Great. It is known that he had access to Babylonian records. Hence the value of his works. Berosus hits Genesis a very hard blow when he fixes the period before the flood, at 34,080 years.

[21] This is the first recorded instance of any one, in matters of importance, *"being warned in a dream."* Vol. 7, Br. Ency., Deluge.

[22] Gen., 5, 24. God took Enoch, but just how we are not told.

He is warned of the coming flood, and the necessity of a ship, by a fish. Manu heeds the warning, builds a boat, and keeps this loquacious fish, which grows to an enormous size. When the flood comes, Manu uses the fish to tow his craft about; and the fish, being a skillful pilot, lands the Ark on the top of a high mountain, where it rests until the waters subside.

§ 8. In the next deluge story, Tamzi, the hero of the epic, is warned to build a ship or Ark, and put his family into it, and all animals; as all flesh is about to be destroyed. He was told, as was Noah afterwards, to coat the seams of his Ark with pitch, within and without. The ship being ready, the windows of heaven are opened; the rain flood pours, drowning every living thing not in Tamzi's Ark. The waters, after a time, subside, and the Ark rests upon Nizir, a mountain.[24] Thereafter Tamzi sent out a dove and a swallow, and they returned. Then he sent out a raven, but the raven came not back. When dry land appeared, Tamzi, on coming from the Ark, gave a thank-offering. In this story, Hea, the God of Waters, intercedes with Bel, the chief deity of the *triad* of Babylon,[25] that the world be not again drowned.

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[24] The mountain upon which Tamzi's Ark rested is southwest of Lake Urumiah. Mt. Ararat is northwest of that lake. These mountains are about 400 miles apart. But there have been no floods there for the past 4000 years.

[25] Gen., 8, 20. For the Babylonian deluges see George Smith's Chaldean account of Genesis, also Br. Ency., Vol. 7, p. 54.

Noah, on leaving the Ark, built an Altar and offered some of the animals, which he had saved from the flood, as burnt offerings to the Lord, and "the Lord *smelled them,*" and promised that "He would not any more curse the ground."[26] But even these myths of the Babylonians were not original with them, for they copied an old, worn, and faded Accadian legend, which was floating around the world long *before* there was any Babylon at all. Whence the Avesta fable, about Yima and his Vara, started, is more difficult to trace. Possibly it is simply an exaggeration of the Armenian plan of burrowing, during the winter, in the earth. We know that, about four hundred years B. C., when Xenophon and his Greeks passed through Armenia, they found plenty of Varas, or underground villages, filled with people who, there, in security, defied the biting frosts of winter, and this practice is not entirely abandoned to this day.

§ 9. Let us notice a few more parallels: Thraetona, the descendant of Yima, divided the earth between his three sons, Selma, Tura and Airia. He bestowed Turan upon Tura; to Selma he gave Rum (Europa); and Turan fell to Airia. Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham and Japhet; and "of them the whole earth was overspread." As we shall hereafter see that Zoroaster talks with Ahura, so also does Moses with the Almighty.

The Persian Bible tells us that Ahura revealed the law to Zoroaster "on the Mount of the Holy Conversations."[27] The Jewish Bible sets forth that the Lord gave to Moses,

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[26] Gen., 7.
[27] Ormazd Yast, Vol. 23, S. B. E. § 31 and note 1.

on Mount Sinai, the ten commandments.[28] The New Testament, the latest part of the Jewish Bible, tells us that God's only begotten son, Jesus, came to reclaim the world and save man from his errors and his sins. He is said to have been born of a Virgin. This part of our Gospel was long preceded by the Avesta, which said that three unborn sons of Zoroaster were to be born of Virgins, at different periods, to renovate the world. They were to bring immortal life to the race. Soshyans, the latest born of these sons, is called the *Beneficent One;* for it is said, he will benefit the *whole bodily* world. He is also called Aastvat-Erata; for he will cause the resurrection,—*bodily* resurrection, the same as the New Testament teaches.[29] But the Avesta was not followed exactly, in all things, by the New Testament, for the God of the Avesta has a son Atar [30] and a daughter Ashi-Vanghui, who is said to be tall formed, and of such intelligence that she can bring heavenly wisdom at her wish.[31]

As we shall see numerous other parallels further on, I will only add that the Avesta, after the death of Zoroaster, was taught everywhere in Iran, and, thereafter, was written in gold letters on twelve thousand Ox-hides; one copy of which was deposited among the archives at Persepolis. This copy was burned by Alexander the Great when he overran Persia; but it had been previously pub-

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[28] Exodus, ch. 20.

[29] Farnardan Yast, Vol. 23, S. B. E., Bund, ch. 22; Dinkard, ch. 14.

[30] Zamyad Yt, §§ 46 to 50.

[31] Ashi Yast, Vol. 23, S. B. E., §§ 1, 2, and 3.

lished in all the seven regions.[32] Plato, an hundred years before this, had studied and admired the simplicity of the doctrines of the Great Persian, who taught, and Plato believed, that good thoughts, good words and good deeds were sufficient to insure a happy tranquillity in the eternal beyond. Does Jesus' Gospel go beyond this?

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[32] Dinkard 7, ch. 6, § 12. The Persians divided the earth into seven Karshvares or zones.

PART FIRST

"The Word of the Lord" Came to the Hebrews by Way of Persia



Life and Teachings of ZOROASTER

CHAPTER I.

ZOROASTER, HIS NAME AND BIRTHPLACE.

Zoroaster, Buddha, Jesus, and Mohammed, each left such an indelible impress upon the age in which he lived that millions since their day have taught, reverenced and believed the doctrines which they proclaimed. The first, and earliest of these names, Zoroaster, like a distant and lofty mountain peak, partly obscured by clouds that hang about it, is somewhat enveloped in tradition. Yet seeing the top, we are certain the mountain has a base. And finding numerous records, supplemented by traditions almost without number, and, from various quarters, we are sure that Zoroaster lived and was, and is, in truth, a great historic reality.

There is no more doubt that he lived and wrought a great work among the people of ancient Iran (Persia) than that Moses, or Solomon, or George Washington lived, and left great names; which blaze and sparkle, upon the historic page. In truth, the foot-prints of Zoroaster are so trampled into and indented into old Persian legends, and history, that we might as well undertake to gainsay

the existence of any other monumental character, as to controvert his life, or his personality.

§ 2. Much curious speculation, and many wild guesses have been made concerning the etymologies of this great man's name. The Greeks called him Zoroastres. In the Avesta, his full name is given as Spitama Zarathrustra. In the Pahlavi, he is called Zartust, and Zardust. Sometimes he is designated as the Spitama; and again as the Righteous. The appellative Spitama comes, probably, from one of his ancestors, back several generations. His name may be a compound, "Zoe" life, and "aster" star. The latter part of his name, "ustra" (camel), may give us a hint.[1] Some writers have endeavored to trace his line back to royalty; but for our purpose, it makes no difference whether that ancestor plowed with camels, or wielded a scepter, or was named for a star. Of this we are certain, that no scholar, however learned and critical, can with absolute certainty state either the derivation of his name or its signification.

§ 3. A more important question presents itself just here. Was Zoroaster born on the bank of distant Oxus, in eastern Iran, or did he first see the light in Bactria, or in Ragha, or was Ardibagan, which lies to the west of the Caspian Sea, his native place? Rival cities, Cyme and Smyrna, and others, claimed the honor of giving Homer to the world. It is possible that they were all wrong. Let an intellectual colossus appear in any age, and, if

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[1] Burnouf and Casartelli both have urged that his name, or a part of it, was derived from the word "ustra," meaning camel.

there be a question as to his birthplace, some land, which was the scene of his activity, will make haste to appropriate him. It was thus in the case of Zoroaster. He did not, as did Cyrus, marshal armies and establish a kingdom. His place, for a time, was less conspicuous. He became the prophet and founder of a religion, which taught the hosts of light to wage unceasing warfare against the powers of darkness. He taught that Ahura-Mazda (Ormazd) was a mighty God, who created heaven, earth and man. He gave a new religion to ancient Iran, to Media, and to surrounding tribes and nations. Good thoughts, good words, and good deeds, were the prime factors in his teachings. Can any religion strike deeper at the root of evil than this? If the mind be filled with good thoughts; if the tongue utters only good words; if the hands perform only good deeds, can the soul's aspirations mount higher? Did the gentle teachings of the Man of Galilee reach beyond these three cardinal points? They surely did not, because they could not. All beyond this is exegesis. Thus it appears that Zoroaster, many centuries before Jesus was born, announced the very beginning, and end, of every religion. It was philosophy, logic and religion, all compressed into one short, pithy sentence. The most ignorant and the most stupid could follow the reasoning to the end. The very pillars of heaven can find nothing better, or beyond this, to rest upon. Nations and distant peoples saw, understood, believed and appreciated these short, simple truths. But we shall see how like another great teacher, many centuries later, he perished in their advocacy. Jesus suffered on Calvary for teaching "peace on earth and good will to all" mankind. In other words, for teaching

men to hold good thoughts, and to utter good words, and to do good deeds to every one. Zoroaster was slain, his blood quenching the holy fires, as he worshipped at the altar. We shall find him all along, to be a man of sublime, undaunted courage, and of unsurpassed patience; a man of such strength of mind, and such firmness of purpose, that mountains of obstacles could not move him. No wonder, therefore, that different places should claim the honor of his birth.

§ 2. The Bundahis[2] calls the Daraga river, the chief of exalted rivers, because the mansion of Porushaspa, the father of Zoroaster, stood upon its high banks; and it says, Zoroaster was born there. The locality of this river is fixed in Airan-Veg. But the Bundahis is, to say the least, a very uncertain guide. It is a curious old book, made up from some worn and tattered manuscripts, which have suffered several recensions, additions, and revisions, and took its present form about the ninth century A. D. It is in fact a collection of fragments, purporting to give, among other things, the history of creation; the conflicts of the good and evil spirits, and is much longer than Genesis, and, if possible, is even more unsatisfactory. It goes into elaborate details about things unknown, to man, and forever unknowable. But in extremities we must not cavil too much with our guide.

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[2] Chapter 30 of the Bundahis is the *end* of the original book. The four other chapters seem to have been added at a much later date. Chapter 34, on "the reckoning of the years," is perhaps the latest interpolation. The whole four last chapters are probably apocryphal. The Bundahis has probably as many recensions as the Pentateuch.

However, let us inquire somewhat as to the location of this Arian-Veg. According to the Vendidad (ch. I) it was the first of the good lands created by Ormazd (God), through which flowed the river Vanguhi Daitya; and this stream, the Bundahis insists, is in the direction of Adarbaigan. In Sassanian times, Vauguhi was the name of the Oxus. The Araxas was also called the same. Now, if we assume that ancient Adarbaigan is that country between Lake Urumiah and the Caspian, there are several rivers, in that confine, to be considered.

If it was the Arraxes (modern Aras), that large stream whose waters flow down from the mountains of Ararat, where Noah's Ark rested, after a very troublesome and destructive rainy season, then, indeed, Zoroaster was born in classical and historic fields, and well might aspire to write a Bible and found a religion.[3] But if we place him there, must we not fix Vistaspa, Gamaspa and others of his satellites there also? For those men continually, after he brought his religion to their notice and acceptance, were simply satellites revolving around an attractive center. In this uncertainty it may have been the Keizel river, farther south, on the banks of which the prophet of Iran first saw the light.[4] Again, there was

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[3] The Bundahis says, in the direction of Ataro-patakan. Persian, Adarbaigan. But where was the writer when he said "in the direction of," etc.? He might have been in Tehran or in Balkh. He does not say the river Daraza is in Adarbaigan, nor are we told where Adarbaigan is.

[4] I call him a prophet on the authority of Luke, 1st, who says, "there have been prophets since the world began."

an insignificant stream called the Darej, whose source was Mt. Savalan, about eighty miles south of the Arraxes, which some writers have sought to make the "chief of exalted rivers." Yet there is nothing whatever about that little sprinkle of waters to make it famous, unless it be the certainty that it is the Daraga, where Porusaspa lived, and where his famous son was born.

§ 3. In those early days, we may ask, did Media include Adarbaigan? If not, then we have another country, at once claiming to have given the prophet of Eran to the world. For the twelfth of the good lands created by Ormazd, was Ragha (Greek Ragia), of the three races, or classes, priests, warriors and husbandmen.

Many oriental scholars have placed this Ragha about ninety miles south of the Caspian, near the present city of Tehran, and, as a help to this argument, it is claimed there were two Raghas, one in Adarbaigan, and another in Media. That Zaratust's father was of Adarbaigan, and his mother from Ragha, near Tehran.

But in ancient Persian, Raga means district or province (dahya), and there would hardly be the confusion of two Ragas, in the same province.

§ 4. Persons anxious to fix the Bethlehem of this early religion think they have surely solved the problem when they cite us to Yasna, 19, section 18; but if that be the finger-board to point us the way, it is, to say the least, a very obscure one.

It mentions four classes and five chiefs in the political world; the house, the village, the tribe, the province, and the Zarathrustra chief, as the fifth. These five chiefs are only necessary in provinces outside of the Zarathrustrian

regency. Ragha had four chiefs only; the house, the village, the tribe, and Zarathrustra as the fourth. But province chief, and the Zarathrustra, being united in one person does not carry with it the proof, nor even a suggestion, that the prophet was born there. That the Pope resides at the Vatican is no proof that it is his birthplace.

No doubt Zarathrustra was the head of the order while living; his exalted character being probably recognized by uniting in him both the temporal and spiritual power for a time at Ragha.

§ 5. Bactria now claims our attention. Here the prophet's ministry became active and effective. And here, unless many concurring traditions be wrong, he suffered martyrdom. We have already seen that the Oxus and Arraxes were both, in former times, called Vanguhi; but this is not surprising, for they are fourteen hundred miles apart, and thirty-five hundred years ago were in provinces held by different peoples. Bactria was in eastern Iran, and is an historic spot; for historians, ethnologists and philologists have agreed that here, or not far from here, the division and separation of one branch of the great Aryan race occurred. Here the Hindus and the Iranians (later Persians), children of that wonderful Aryan family, bade each other farewell.[5] The

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[5] Aban Yast, §§ 3, 4 and 5. Farvarden Yast, § 8. I am aware that there are those who claim that this refers to the Araxas; but the Araxas is a small stream compared to the Oxus. The former is only 500 miles long, and is shallow and fordable in the summer. The Oxus is navigable more than 1,000 miles, and some of its affluents are nearly as large as the Araxas.

Hindus to cross the mountains linger along the shaded banks of the great Indus, where they develop their civilization, and write the Veda; the Persians to find a home, for a time, on that other renowned stream, the Oxus, until their swelling numbers reach out beyond the Caspian and until they give law and religion to all the land from the Tigris to the Oxus, and from the Caspian to the Persian Gulf.[6]

The Oxus, in its long acquaintance, has borne various names. In early Persian times it was called Veh-Rud. The Mohammedans called it El-Nahr; later Jihun. At present the Asiatics call it Amu-Daria. As the Jihun, it was said to be the *Gihon* of Genesis, that figures in the garden of Eden. In this region many changes in nations, and great changes in nature, have occurred to make it remarkable. For when the Avesta was composed, the Oxus poured its volume into the Caspian. To-day it empties into the Aral.

The Avesta says "that large river, known afar, that is as large as the whole waters that run along the earth; that runs powerfully down to the sea—Voru-Kasha (the Caspian). All the shores of the sea Voru-Kasha are boiling over when she streams down there." From this river flow all the waters that spread over the seven Karshvars.

§ 6. An observation might be made just here, that the Hindu Bible has an antiquity of probably more than four thousand years; and yet there are those who say

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[6] There is scarcely a dissenting voice on this point, at this day; their language, their race habits, and even their skulls are similar. The names of their ancient Gods are almost the same.

that Zoroaster's Bible, and his religion were not given to Iran until about six hundred years B. C.

Were these children of the Indus favored like the Jews? Were they the chosen people of the "Great I Am?" and were the Iranians the unfortunate Esau's of the ancient Tribes? We know that the Veda was not in existence at the time of the separation; hence we know that the parting of the tribes took place *more* than four and possibly five or six thousand years ago. We also know that the Vedic religion, and that of the Avesta followed the old Aryan system of ancestral worship. This they carried with them into their new homes; for the Vedas teach the worship of the Pitris or fathers, and oblations were offered to them.[7] The Iranians were also zealous in their reverence of the Fravashis or spirits of their progenitors.

After the separation, there must have been friendly intercourse between these children of the same family; for the Vendidad[8] tells us that the fourth of the good lands created[9] was the beautiful Bakhdi (Greek Baktra), with high lifted banners; and that the fifteenth of the good countries was the land of the seven rivers (the Indus and its affluents), the lands of the Hindus.

It is possible that it was a religious schism that caused

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[7] The first Gathas, those composed by Zoroaster, make no mention of ancestral worship. He was too intent on the worship of Omazd.

[8] Vendidad, ch. I.

[9] The Vendidad fixes different periods of time for the creation of the earth. It does not hold to the creation of the world in six days.

the separation, for we shall see, hereafter, how they quarreled about their Gods and their religions. But it was only in argumentation, as to whether the Veda or the Avesta pointed the true way to the shadow-land.

Although the earlier Gathas are undoubtedly the product of Zoroaster's heart and brain, yet they nowhere fix his native home; and with all the light at the present day obtainable, it is impossible to determine that vexed question to a certainty.

Speculation on this point might lead us through several pages, but in the end we should only have a multitude of conflicting opinions. Of one thing we are certain, that the life-work of this great soul was of such magnitude and importance that his doctrines and his influence have crossed oceans and continents and are yet an active force in the world.

CHAPTER II.

WHEN DID ZOROASTER LIVE?

§ 1. The most learned scholars, for the last twenty-four hundred years, have disagreed about the period in which Zoroaster lived. Some place him far back in antiquity; yet others assign him to a more recent date. One of the latter, Dr. West, thinks he was born six hundred and sixty years before Jesus. That argument, it would seem, is not difficult to overthrow. Dr. West pins his faith, in this matter, to the 34th chapter of the Bundahis, which, as we have heretofore stated, is an old work compiled about one thousand years ago. To have a better comprehension of that work, we may add that it treats of the cosmogony, or beginning of the world, and its creatures, as revealed by the religion of Ormazd (God).

Good and evil spirits appear at once. Ormazd is supreme in goodness, and his region is endless light. He ever was, and ever will be. Aharman, with desire for destruction, and not aware of the existence of Ormazd, was in the abyss. Both of these spirits are limited and unlimited; but as to their own selves, they are limited. Aharman, the evil spirit, who is elsewhere called Akemano, on rising from the abyss, and seeing Ormazd, and the light, rushed back to his gloomy abode, and there created demons and fiends to assist him in the conflict which he saw was at hand. Ormazd, who knew the end from the beginning, thereupon first created Vohu-Mano, the

archangel of good thought, afterwards he created others. The evil one produced Mitoket (falsehood), then Akoman, the demon of evil thought, that great father of wickedness, and after that created others; then the dreadful strife began, which is to last until Aharman is overthrown; at which time the renovation of the universe will take place. It is the old story of Genesis, much amplified; good and evil in fierce, never-ending conflict.

The original Bundahis, no doubt, ended with the thirtieth chapter, which gives an account of the resurrection. The 34th chapter fixes the existence [1] of the world, from its beginning to its end or decay, at *twelve thousand* years; three thousand of which was the duration of the spiritual, when creatures were unthinking, unmoving, intangible. Three thousand years was the duration of Gayomard and the Ox [2] in the world; [3] when the evil one rushed in and Gayomard (he was the first man), after thirty years of tribulation, died. But in dying he gave forth seed, which was kept in charge of two angels, and placed in the earth, where, after forty years, Mashya and Mashyoi grew up from the earth in the form of a Rivas, which is a vegetable, something like a rhubarb plant.[4] This was the first human pair, the Adam and Eve of the race, if we follow the Bundahis; and they

[1] Dr. West, himself, admits that the 34th chapter of Bundahis is a late addition, and of doubtful authority. See Vol. 5, S. B. E. Introduction, p. 43.

[2] This primal Ox is supposed to be the progenitor of all animals, also certain grains. Chap. 4, Bund.

[3] It is said that Gayomard was watching for the coming of Zaratust. Bund., ch. 24.

[4] Chapter 15, Bund., also Zad-Sparan, ch. 10 and ch. 34, Bund.

grew up from the earth in such a manner that their arms rested behind; and their waists were so close together that it was impossible to distinguish the male from the female. They were thus fifty years together, but were not yet husband and wife; but, finally, changed from the shape of a plant, into the perfect human form, and breath (nismo, which is the soul), came into them.

The ethnology of the Tibetans is about as sensible as either Genesis or the Bundahis as to the origin of man. The three accounts united, and leaving out certain parts of each, and adding certain things from the others, may come near the correct solution of that enigma: man's creation.

The Tibetans claim (in the legend of Tanjur) to be the descendants of an ape (sent to Tibet by the deity Chenresig) and a female demon. This ape and the demon became the parents of six children, every one of whom, as soon as weaned, were abandoned by their parents, in a great garden of fruit, there to survive or perish, as best they might. But they lived, and their numbers multiplied prodigiously, so that in a short time they increased to five hundred. The fruits of the garden being all devoured, they were on the point of starvation, when the Ape, their ancestor, returned. Amazed at their number, and seeing their sore distress, he besought Chenresig, for their relief. That God listens to this entreaty, and promises to become their guardian and protector. In fulfillment of his promise, he threw to them, in great abundance, from a lofty mountain peak, five kinds of grain. Upon this grain the monkeys fed and fattened; but the eating of it worked marvels. Their tails began to grow shorter and shorter, and their hair commenced to drop off. After a time their

tails disappeared entirely, and their hair was gone. Instead of a wild gibberish, they began to talk, and were transformed into men and women. They then clothed themselves with leaves. Adam and Eve, we are told, made themselves aprons of fig-leaves. The Lord afterward, according to the record, clothed Adam and his wife with the skins of beasts. The poor Tibetans, however, were not thus highly favored. The Lord did not become their clothier, nor did Chenresig assist them any further, but left them to earn their bread in the sweat of their faces.

§ 2. Those persons who wrote the Bundahis overlooked the 19th chapter of the Vendidad, which says the Good Spirit "made the creation in the boundless time." Thus, time is not limited to the little span of twelve thousand years. But not to be outdone by Genesis, the Bundahis writers set it down that Ormazd (the Lord) appears on the scene and makes a speech to Mashya and Mashyoi. In Genesis, the Lord punishes Adam and Eve for eating of the tree of knowledge, and *curses the ground,* and drives them out of Eden, because they disobey Him; and, lest they get back again, he puts cherubims, with flaming swords, to keep them out. But Mashya and Mashyoi are not met with reproaches, and curses, and punishments. The Lord, in his speech to them, says: "You are the ancestry of the world; and you are created in perfect devotion, by me; perform, then, devotedly, the duty of the law; think good thoughts; speak good words; do good deeds, but worship no demons. (Bund., ch. 15.)

There is another clash at this point, between these authorities, which must be noticed. Genesis tells us that the world was created in six days, and that Adam was the

product of the last day. Eve was, as yet, unthought of; for the Lord caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and then took out one of his ribs and constructed Eve. This must have been a long time subsequent to Adam, for, before she came, he had given names to "all the cattle of the fields and all the fowls of the air, and every living thing"; and as there were many tens of thousands of "living things", it must have taken him years to accomplish this task. During all which time "there was no help-meet for Adam" (Gen. 2). The Bundahis makes the time six thousand and thirty years from the creation to Gayomard's death. His seed, whatever it was, remained in the ground forty years; then it was fifty years before Mashya and Mashyoi were changed into the full human form. It was, therefore, six thousand one hundred and twenty years when breath came to this Iranian Adam and Eve. (Ch. 15, Bund.)

But it would seem that even one hundred and twenty years is a short time for Gayomard's seed to progress and develop from a protoplasm into a protozoan, and thence ascend to the radiates, thence on to the mollusks, and still higher to the articulates, thence up to the vertebrates and the full stature of man.

Nature is slow and toilsome in her methods; is never hurried for time; and had those writers said ten thousand years instead of one hundred and twenty years, or what is better still, forty thousand years, and many thousands beyond that, they probably would have been more nearly exact. Dr. James Croll, in his great work on "climate and time", puts the age of the earth at sixty millions of years, and thinks it is probably much older. Lord Kevlin has furnished abundant proof that the earth

has been a solidified body for at least thirty millions of years. Yet these unscientific Parsee dreamers, and blunderers, and those old and unknown compilers of some ancient and worn out legends concerning Adam and the creation, ignorant about the very subject upon which they are treating, write down our globe[5] as a youngster of only a few thousand years. But it may be said that chapter 34, Bundahis, only fixes the chronology of the race after Mashya and Mashyoi make their appearance. Suppose that be so; how did those writers learn that during the first three thousand years creatures were unthinking, unmoving and intangible? How did they know that Gayomard and the Ox held sway for only three thousand years? How did they know that Gayomard died in tribulation, thirty years after the adversary rushed in? For he died while Mashya and Mashyoi were yet in the ground sprouting up, like rhubarb plants. Gayomard, therefore, could not give this Adam and Eve of the Iranians the word and let them pass it on down to the Bundahis writers. We have no proof that the Ox told them, though we might as readily believe that the Ox did tell them as to believe that the Ass talked to Balaam. But, if that Ox was not gifted with speech, how then did they learn of this wonderful chronology?[6] Did they write it from old and worn out traditions, the same as Ezra and

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[5] The Jews make our world less than 6,000 years; and the Parsees make it less than 10,000 years old.

[6] In the Iranian Bible the Primeval Bull is even more loquacious than Balaam's Ass in the Jewish Bible. For the Ass, see Numbers 22, for the Bull see ch. 4, Bund., p. 20.

Nehemiah wrote the Pentateuch? How did the writers of those Bibles learn of the marvelous matters which they set forth? The answer in each case is the same. They say *they were inspired* and the things they write about are *revelations from on High.*

§ 3. Instead of trusting to traditions, myths and uncertainties, let us now take a date that is fixed and unimpeachable. In the year 585 B. C., the Medes under Cyaxares were waging war against the Lydians.

It had progressed, as most wars do, with varying fortunes, for five years. But on the 28th day of May, in that year, while a great battle was in progress, the sun suddenly suffered a total eclipse. The darkness of night coming on at mid-day, the terrified combatants saw, or thought they saw, an omen of divine displeasure. Instantly the battle ceased, and both sides became anxious for peace, and peace was at once concluded. They were not aware that Thales, a Milesian astronomer had calculated this eclipse and had foretold the same to the day and hour.[7] Here is something that can be disproved or verified; for God's laws are uniform and certain. They are without variableness or shadow of turning. It is a wonderful science that can reach out into the future and tell the exact position of the earth or sun, or his satellites, at a certain hour of a certain day. Yet the masters of astronomy have accomplished this for thousands of years past, and are doing the same to-day. And on this 28th day of May, 585 years B. C., astronomers, who have traced backward the path of the King of Day, find that

[7] Herodotus 1; 103. Br. Ency., Vol. 18, p. 563; Title Persia.

in Asia Minor, where this battle was being fought, there was a total eclipse of the sun. Here, then, is a reckoning that is indisputable. Now, if Zoroaster was born only 660 years before Christ, he was exactly seventy-five years old at the date of the eclipse.

At the age of twenty, we are told by Zad-Sparam, that Zoroaster, abandoning all worldly desires, and laying hold on righteousness, went forth on his mission and commenced his labors by assisting the poor; and it was ten years before he secured a single convert. This was Medyomah, his cousin. This leaves him exactly *forty-five* years in which to convert the whole Median nation before this battle with the Lydians. The Medes, we know, professed the Zoroastrian religion. But the time here is too short. Did anything approaching it ever before or since happen on this earth? The Jews from the time of Moses down to Jesus, a period of fifteen hundred years, labored to convert surrounding nations, but did not succeed in a single instance; and they were, so they said, especially favored by the Most High.

Who, then, were these Medes, that they so speedily, as is claimed, adopted the faith of Iran? They were then a great people; they were no longer a mere tribe. Generations before this six tribes became merged into one, and they called themselves Medes. Their religion, for generations before this battle, was Zoroastrian. Even before Zoroaster's day they sacrificed to the earth, to fire, to water, to the winds, the sun and the clouds, after the manner of the Iranians. The latter did not erect temples or altars; they worshipped in the open air; on high hills or mountains; and the Medes practiced the same rites. In fact, the Medes and the Persians were both children

of the same Aryan family. The Medes were formerly called Aryans. The Persians wore the Median uniform in war. The Medes never buried a dead body until it had been torn by a dog or a bird; the Persians did the same.[8]

Now how could Zoroaster teach those two nations all this in forty-five years? The Medes and Persians of that period occupied a strip of territory, reaching westward from the Oxus, more than twelve hundred miles. We have seen that the prophet was ten years in securing *one* convert. How long was it before he captured two nations?

We shall see further along that surrounding nations made war on him and his people because of his new religion. We shall see his armies defeated and driven from the field; and only at the last rally were they successful, but at that moment the prophet himself was slain.

It was three hundred years after Jesus' day before Constantine could make the religion of Jesus the national religion. And even then there were chisms and conflicting creeds, and bloodshed, and persecutions, before the tumult ended. And to this day religious factions glare at each other fiercely. A new religion among a barbarous people, or any other people, is a plant of slow growth. It would seem, therefore, that we must search for the epoch of Zoroaster more than six hundred and sixty years before the Christian era. Besides this, the Avesta nowhere speaks of the Persian nation; and the reason is, that it was composed *before there was* any Persian nation in existence. There were only *Tribes* in that day; and Yasna,

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[8] Herodotus 1, 140. Ibid. 7, 62.

33, section 5, speaks of "our tribes". According to Gos-Yast, it was the gallant Husravah who united the Aryan tribes into a kingdom.

§ 4. Now, let us see what Berosus, a Chaldean priest, born in Babylonia about three hundred and sixty years B. C., has to say about this matter. He translated into Greek a history of Babylon, and there are very many things in the Jewish Bible so strikingly similar to Berosus' work that suspicion is aroused that the Jewish writers drew their *inspiration* largely from Berosus.

True, his system of chronology will startle staid and devout believers in the theory that our earth was created only six thousand years ago; for Berosus makes the record of the race four hundred and thirty-two thousand years old down to the flood, and over thirty-four thousand years since the flood. In connection with his history he mentions the name of Zoroaster as living a period twenty-four hundred years before Jesus' time. Berosus was not a prophet, predicting the birth of this great teacher at some future day. He was simply a chronicler of facts and events, as he found them stamped in clay or burnt upon bricks. It happened that Babylonia was overrun and conquered at that distant period, and Zoroaster's name is mentioned in connection with that event. He must, therefore, have lived before the historian could write of him.

A still more distant period is set for the prophet by Aristotle, the teacher of Alexander the Great, and one of the greatest scholars and philosophers that the world has ever known, whose masterly mind ought to entitle his utterances to serious consideration. Aristotle is sure that

Zoroaster lived six thousand years *before Xerxes.* This carries him back into remote antiquity; back over eight thousand years; back three thousand years before *Genesis.* It is a strong utterance, not carelessly made, but when we consider that this earth is millions, and millions of years old, and that the Aryans were in Asia, probably ten thousand years ago, and more likely before that period, Aristotle's date for Zoroaster may not seem so utterly extravagant. Bunson thinks the date set by Aristotle is not far out of the way; but adds that whether the date be set too high cannot at present be answered.

Plato, twenty-three hundred years ago, mentions Zoroaster's religion as being established among the Medes in western Iran, but does not fix a date for its appearance. He intended visiting the Medes and Persians to investigate their religious doctrines, but their wars with the Greeks prevented.

§ 5. All the early Greek writers, those living 2000 to 2500 years ago, agree in placing the date of Zoroaster about six thousand years before the Christian Era. It is those only, of a more recent period, who claim that the Iranian prophet came upon the stage only about twenty-five hundred years ago. It must be noticed that these late writers seem chained to the theory that the earth is a recent production, and that man is a late arrival. They seem to stand in awe of fixing a distant date for the prophet, lest they collide with Genesis. In some things Genesis may be right; but its chronology is misleading.

Pliny the Elder (born 23, A. D.), not being thus hampered, speaks of Zoroaster as living and teaching centuries before Moses. In fact, Pliny speaks of two Zoroasters; the first of whom flourished long before Genesis;

the latter about the time of Darius Hystaspes. Hermippus, who lived 250 years before Jesus, assigns the Great Persian to a time centuries before the siege of Troy. Plutarch holds to the same opinion.

Xanthus of Lydia (B. C. 500) thought the great teacher lived six thousand years before Xerxes. Edward Clodd, in his childhood of religions, says, we are sure that Zoroaster lived more than three thousand years ago, because his religion was established before the conquest of Bactria by the Assyrians, which took place twelve hundred years before Jesus' day. Justin makes the direct assertion that the prophet was a Bactrian priest, and ruler of the Bactrians. Now, if he is right, then the Persian antedates, by centuries, both David and Solomon.

It must be admitted that at a very early period Zoroaster's name had traveled far; for in old Irish history there is mention of him and of a star, and a strange light at his birth.[9]

Ctesias, who lived 400 years B. C., states that Ninus, with a vast Assyrian army, made war on the Bactrians; took their Capitol, and that Zoroaster was there slain. Ctesias, though not always reliable, fixes this event about nine hundred years before Jesus.

Ancient writers vary considerably as to the period of the prophet, but they agree in placing him anterior to the Jewish exile a century before the founding of Rome. In any event it cannot be considered "extravagant", as Dr. West claims, if we place him back to the time, or even beyond the time, of Moses. For we cannot overlook

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[9] See Vallancy's vindication of ancient history of Ireland: Vol. 4, p. 202.

the fact that in recent researches among the rocks and ruins of the ancient city of Nippur, there have been found stamped records upon burnt clay, which carry the written history of man back *beyond Genesis more than three thousand years.*

Old Babylon and Ur, of the Chaldees, are also yielding up their secrets and telling us of their Gods, their Kings, and their religions. That part of the world was teeming with populations more than eight thousand years ago, and probably more than ten thousand years ago; and is it unreasonable to suppose that the Great I Am, would, and did, inspire some devout souls on the banks of the Oxus, as well as on the Tigris, and the Euphrates, to teach the Parsees and their progenitors the way to a better life? The great and renowned leader of that religious throng was Zoroaster; but for himself he took no "thought of the morrow"; and so left the world in an eternal controversy, as to the period in which he lived. And to this day no human being can state the exact time of his sojourn on earth, although it is highly probable that he lived before Solomon, and probably before Moses.

CHAPTER III.

ZOROASTER'S EARLY YEARS.

It is certain that Zoroaster's life was one long continued struggle to build up all that was good; in other words, to teach his people to hold good thoughts, and utter good words, and do good deeds to all mankind. But it is probably a fiction and a myth, as stated in the Vendidad, that Angra Manyu (the Devil), knowing of his birth, summoned the fiends to assemble at the head of Arezura—the ridge at the Gate of Hell, because, as he said, the Holy Zaratust was just born in the house of Porushaspa.[1]

Nor shall I write down, as a sober truth, that in his birth and growth, the waters and the plants rejoiced and grew, and that all the creatures of the Good Creation cried out "Hail". "Hail to us; for he is born the Athraven (priest) Spitama Zarathrustra. He will offer us sacrifices, with libations, and bundles of baresma; and there will be the good law of the worshippers of Mazda. It will come and spread through all the seven zones of the earth.[2] Mithra, the Lord of Wide Pastures, will increase all the excellencies of our countries and allay all our troubles."

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[1] Vend., ch. 20, § 46. We have elsewhere said that Porushaspa was the prophet's father.

[2] Farvarden Yast, S. B. E., Vol. 23, §§ 93, 94.

That other wild statement, that the soul of the Primal Bull, thousands of years before Zoroaster's appearance, obtained a vision of him, is strangely fabulous. So, also, we must class that later statement, that another gifted Ox foretold the coming of the prophet.

The safer road to follow is the old beaten path; that this man was born the same as other mortals; though it would not be extraordinary if he inherited a predilection for his future mission. For the tradition is that Dugdahova, his mother, was so filled with that divine nimbus, effulgence, or glory, that her father, thinking her bewitched, sent her away from home; sent her to the village of Porushaspa. On her journey thither, as she stands upon a lofty eminence, surveying with wonder, the beauties of the landscape that stretched out before her, Revelation mentions that she heard voices bidding her go forward. She listened further, and, the voices giving assurance that the village whither she was tending would be compassionate, she proceeded; and there she met Porushaspa, whom she subsequently married. And this divine radiance, or glory, passed on down to Zoroaster, her son.[3]

Another story current among the Iranians at this time is that the production of Zaratust was caused by his parents drinking Homjuice, infused with cow's milk; the Hom, being a plant or shrub, that grew in the mountains of Persia, and when pounded and the juice squeezed out and mixed with milk it became pleasant to the taste. It was used as a libation in ceremonial worship; and the

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[3] Dinkard 7, S. B E, ch 2; 7 to 9

Jews,[4] as told in the book of Numbers, probably copied as to their drink offering from the Iranian Hom juice worship. But besides pouring "strong wine to the Lord"; the Jews went beyond this, and poured drink-offerings unto *other* Gods.

§ 2. It has been, and will be further noticed, that there are many parallels and striking resemblances between what is said of Zoroaster and his religion, and later moral heroes, and their religions. I shall give dates and other matters, as far as attainable, that the reader may judge if one has been, or is, copied from the other.

We may now notice the following: The New Testament distinctly sets forth that a star came and stood over the place where Jesus was born; and that Herod sought to destroy him. But many centuries before Jesus came more marvelous things were written and told in the Persian Bible about Zoroaster. For three days before he was born the whole village where his father lived became luminous. A divine radiance or light encircled his father's house: and the child laughed outright as he came into the world. Those present, who saw and heard these strange occurrences, wondered much, and some were frightened. Thereupon Porushaspa, the father, visited Durasrobo, an idolatrous priest, hard by, renowned for his sorcery and witchcraft, and the child was pronounced foolish. This fatal piece of information so wrought upon the mind of the father that he gave his consent that the Karap[5] might at once make way with the babe.

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[4] See Numbers, ch. 28, V. 7. Jeremiah 19, v. 13.

[5] S. B. E., Vol. 47, ch. 3. Those wizards were called Karaps.

Thereat, the wizard sought to compress and twist the head of the child to cause his death. Instantly an invisible power stayed his hand—withered it; and it fell harmless at his side. The Karap, in pain and alarm at this unknown power, seized the infant and threw him in front of a herd of cattle that he might be trampled to death. But an old Ox, at the head of the column, stood guard over the child while the drove, on either side, passed him by. A similar attempt was made by throwing the child in front of a herd of horses, and the leader stood guard, the same as the Ox. The wizard then undertook to burn the babe, and heaped a great pile of wood; and put the infant thereon; but the fire would not burn; thus was the child thrice saved. This story is many centuries older than that of Herod and Jesus—was this later story a copy?

ZOROASTER AND THE WOLF.

§ 3. If the reader can believe that Daniel was thrown into a den of hungry lions, and there remained over night, and came out unharmed, it will not be very trying for him to credit the story of Zoroaster and the wolf. The Persian legend surely surpasses, if possible, the Jewish one; both being very improbable. The strange happenings, above mentioned, have so shattered Poru-

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Kavis and Karaps. Of course every one is familiar with the story that Herod sought to kill Jesus. But outside of the New Testament there is no mention of Herod's order to slay the innocents; nor does history, other than the Persian Bible or its commentaries, make mention of this attempt to kill Zoroaster.

shaspa's mind that he consents that his son may be thrown into a wolf's den, her cubs being first killed to make her more furious. But two angels are on guard, Vohuman, the angel of good thought; and Srosh, the angel of obedience; and they close the Wolf's mouth.[6]

In the case of Daniel it took only *one* angel to close the mouths of a *den* of lions. But Vohuman and Srosh did not cease their ministrations with the closing of the wolf's mouth; the babe was hungry; and during the night they brought a sheep, her udder being full of milk, into the den, and it gave suck to the famished child. At dawn the mother of the babe ran into the lair, expecting to find only the bones of her child, but found him safe, and upbraided her husband bitterly, that the wolf was kinder to her child than its father.

Here we may consider that if God saved Daniel from the lions, and if he knows all things, he knew that the Persian child was born to preach a better religion than the Karaps and the Wizards were doing. The Persians being older and a more numerous people than the Jews, why should they not have a teacher to direct them in the right paths? The Lord, it would seem, was mindful of them, surely.

Zoroaster lived long centuries before Daniel, and if either story is suggested or copied from the other, with the variations above mentioned, that of the lions is surely subsequent to that of the wolf.[7]

Another parallel will be here noticed. Jesus at twelve is found in the Temple, in the midst of the wise men

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[6] Dinkard 7, ch. 3, § 16, and Dink., p. 146.
[7] Dinkard, Book 7, ch. 3, § 46.

hearing and asking questions.[8] Zoroaster at seven years is engaged in a religious discussion with the Karaps and declares that he reverences the poor, and the righteous, but not the wicked. If we may trust the Dinkard, he early began to manifest wonderful intellectual powers, and an exalted mind filled with a desire for righteousness.

The same authority speaks of the beauty of his person, and the grandeur of his character, which fitted him for the priesthood, or warriorship, and that he was an enemy to everything vile. Such gifts of heaven, in any age, stamp their possessor as a born leader of men. If the warrior spirit predominates, he marshals armies and subdues empires. If devoutly inclined, he remodels and reforms old religions or establishes a new one.

§ 4. Whether it be true, as stated in the Zartust-Nama, that Porushaspa placed the future prophet at the age of seven in charge of a noted teacher for instruction, we have no certain means of knowing. Educational matters, at that early period, were highly primitive, and rudimentary; and what he was taught, we can only conjecture. If he lived only thirty-five hundred years ago it is probable that the learning of Egypt, prior to his coming, had penetrated to the Oxus, and beyond. As far back as five thousand years ago the civilization of Egypt was wonderful. In truth, Egypt was the land of learning, and her people, as Herodotus mentions, "were excessively attentive to the Gods." The Greeks borrowed nearly all the names of their Gods from the Egyptians. Rome did

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[8] Luke 2, vs. 42 to 49.

the same. The Egyptians assigned a particular God to preside over each of the thirty days of the month; the Iranians, at least in the later Avesta, followed, with especial care, this example.

It is possible, nay, it is probable, that Zoroaster's instructor may have been a learned Egyptian scholar; for he could not be very learned, unless he knew much of that extraordinary people. But that matter will be considered further along; it being only necessary to here add that Zoroaster, after the age of seven, like other Parsee children, was allowed to wear the sacred shirt. This was a loose tunic, of white, with short sleeves; the body of it reaching below the waist. Jews, Greeks and Romans, afterward adopted this form of dress, except that they made them much longer. The Dinkard calls it "the Star spangled garment." At the age of fifteen, young persons tied it on with the sacred girdle, in token that sin was ended.[9]

Whether the putting on of the sacred shirt was in vogue before Zaratust's time, is not so clear; but we are sure that the religious formula of the girdle (Kusti) was known and practiced long before the separation of the Hindu Aryans, from the Aryans of Iran.[10] The Hindus called it the sacred *cord*; the Iranians the sacred-thread girdle. The former wore it over the left shoulder and

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[9] Dinkard, Vol. 37, S. B. E., p. 474; also Dadistan, ch. 38, § 22. Isaiah, ch. 59, v. 17. Put on a garment of *vengeance*.

[10] That separation took place more than 4,300 years ago.

under the right arm; the Iranians passed it three times around the waist.

After Zartust brought the good religion the girdle was put on with a solemn religious ceremony, and was worn as a sign of worship. The man or woman about to assume the girdle, recites a prayer: "May Ahura Mazda be Lord, and Aharam (the Devil) be unprevailing, smitten and defeated. May the demons, fiends, wizards, Kavis and Karpans, tyrants, sinners, apostates, and enemies, be smitten and defeated. May enemies be confounded. Ormazd is the Lord. I renounce all sin, all evil thoughts, evil words, evil deeds. For sins of thought, word and deed, do thou pardon. I am penitent. I have scorn for Aharman. Righteousness is the best good, a blessing it is. Perfect rectitude is a blessing. Come to my protection, O! Ormazd! A Mazda worshipper am I. I praise the Mazda religion, the best and most excellent of things. I profess (Ashem-vohu) holiness is the best of all good." [11]

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[11] The prayer is quite long and I have abridged it somewhat, but have omitted only repetitions. See p. 383, Dadistin. The girdle consisted of six strands; each strand having twelve fine white woolen.

CHAPTER IV.

ZOROASTER FROM FIFTEEN TO TWENTY YEARS.

§ 1. When Zoroaster had attained the age of fifteen his brothers [1] demanded of Porushaspa, their father, their portions. And among the goods there was a girdle, and instead of wealth the future prophet wound the sacred girdle about himself, in token of his devotion to the Lord. If the other brothers demanded a girdle there is no record of it, and even if they sought one the luster and halo that surrounds the great name of their illustrious brother so overshadows them that they are left in dark obscurity.

Such things as risking himself to assist some aged people across a swollen and treacherous river, and in feeding the famine-stricken beasts of burden from his father's crib, are blazoned forth as indicating a heart touched with sympathetic emotions. Those unknown brothers may have joined him in those generous acts, but history and tradition pass them by without mention.

We next catch a glimpse of him when, at the age of twenty, abandoning worldly desires, and seeking only righteousness, he leaves home without the consent of his parents, and goes forth filled with compassion to assist

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[1] We are told that he had two brothers older than himself, and two younger. These were not children of Dugdhova. Polygamy, then, was common; and Porushaspa must have had at least three wives, one of whom preceded the mother of the prophet.

the poor. That which is most favorable to the soul, he says, is to nourish the poor, give fodder to hungry cattle, keep the holy fires burning, and to reclaim the wicked.[2]

There is one matter which concerns the whole Iranian people, that ought to be here mentioned. Their *love of truth-speaking* was cultivated to such an extent as to cause Herodotus, who wrote four hundred and forty years B. C. to make special mention of it.[3]

He says that to tell a lie is "considered by them as the greatest disgrace. Beginning at the age of five, they instruct their sons in three things only: to ride, to use the bow, and to speak the truth." The teaching of this ancient people, in the matter of truth-speaking, no doubt proceeded from the prophet; for we shall further along see that he fought the lie-demon, during all his mature life.

§ 2. There is a tradition that has floated along for a thousand years, that the prophet lived in a desert or wilderness, twenty years, on cheese. This is so highly questionable that we dismiss it, by asking where he obtained this peculiar diet? Or was the cheese brought to him that he might eat it there? He may have fasted somewhat; Jesus fasted; John the Baptist lived in the wilderness on locusts and wild-honey; Buddah fasted until he nearly perished. The Jews, later on, and yet, have their periods of fasting; and it is not improbable that Zoroaster fasted for a time. But the statement that his diet, for twenty years, consisted solely of cheese is absurd; and

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[2] Zad-Sparam, Vol. 47, S. B. E., ch. 20, § 7 to § 16.
[3] Herodotus-Clio, 1, 138. He was born 484 years B. C.

only crept into history through one of the fables of the Zartust-Namah.[4]

Another tradition is that in the beginning of his career he lived in solitude, in a cave, on the top of a high mountain, the Persian Sinai. This was the "mount of the *Holy Questionings*"; where he held communion, it is said, with the Most High. The mountain quaked and flamed and burned up, but the prophet escaped without harm. Is chapter 19, Exodus, copied from this; or is this a weak imitation of Moses at Sinai?

The Lord, we are told, descended upon Sinai in fire, and "the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount did quake greatly. And the Lord came down upon Mt. Sinai." Now, the Parsees believed, and the remnant of them yet stoutly insist, that the Lord talked with Zoroaster "on the Mountain of the Holy Questionings." They persistently believe that the Lord, there, taught their prophet the good religion, and that he was the Divine Instrument to teach it to the people. They insist that the Avesta—their Bible—is the inspired word of God.[5]

The compilers of Exodus may have read the Avesta; and, on the other hand, the Iranian sage may have known of the teachings of Moses. This much, however, is certain; they both taught that there was one God, the Creator and Ruler of the Universe. But which of those

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[4] Zartust-Namah is a fabulous life of the prophet, written in the thirteenth century A. D. It is a grain of wheat to a bushel of chaff.

[5] The Christian Church will not admit this; nay, it dare not, lest it go to pieces.

great souls, Moses or Zoroaster, antedates the other, who can tell? We are, however, certain of this: that high mountains, the wilderness, deserts and caves, have, in the history of the race, played conspicuous parts. At the period when the earth was supposed to be flat, a high mountain was thought to be nearer heaven, and the Gods did not have so far to travel, and could make the journey to the earth more easily.

§ 3. The Iranians canonized their holy mountain in a hymn of praise. They say "We worship the mountain that gives us understanding of the law. We worship it with offerings and libations by day and by night." "We worship all the Holy creations of Ahura." "We worship Ahura, who smites the fierce Angra Mainyu." "We worship Thee, Omarzda, who will give life in the blissful abode of the Holy Ones." "We come to Thee for help, O, Lord, Ashem-Vohu, Holiness is the best of all good." [6]

There has been much discussion as to which of these mountains shall have precedence, as to those marvelous sayings about them. The reasoning is as follows:

The separation of the Hindu Aryans, from those of Iran, took place forty-three hundred years ago, and possibly before that date. Now, if the Iranian mountain episode or tradition had been prevalent before the separation some mention of it would probably be found in the Rigveda. But concerning this matter, it is absolutely silent. Therefore, the Zoroastrian Sinai (the Mountain

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[6] Ormazd-Yast, § 31, etc., S. B. E., Vol. 23. The name of this mountain is Osdastar, and it is in Seistan. It is the Sinai of the Iranians. Ahura there revealed the Law to Zoroaster.

of the Holy Questionings), and all that is said to have happened there, is perhaps later than four thousand three hundred years ago. But the separation above mentioned was at least eight hundred years before Moses led those Hebrew slaves out of Egypt. The Iranians are, therefore, an older people than the Hebrews. They were in Bactria, and along the Oxus, at least eight hundred years before the Hebrews fed upon manna in the Wilderness.

§ 4. The period of Moses, at the time of the happenings at Sinai (if such things really did happen), and if the Chronology of the Jewish Bible is correct, was about fifteen hundred years B. C. Was Zoroaster in existence at that time? Did he live before that date, or subsequently? These questions cannot be safely and surely answered, either in the affirmative or the negative. Of course, those writers who stand in dread of Genesis, will reply that Zoroaster was a Persian, living about six hundred years B. C.

While this late date for him is certainly wrong, it may be that his period is not so far back as the alleged date of Moses. But the date and supposed writing of Moses are assailed. We are told that he did not write the Pentateuch, and that Ezra and Nehemiah, about five hundred years B. C., compiled some old Jewish legends and what records they could find, and thus gave us the books credited to Moses. We are cited to Second Kings, chapter 22, where Hilkiah, the high priest, about six hundred and twenty years B. C., says he *found* the book of *Deuteronomy* in the *House of the Lord.* If Moses wrote that book, it lay hidden about nine hundred years. If written on paper or papyrus, the folios would be rotten in five hundred years. If on cowhides, the ink would fade long

before nine hundred years. The *"find"* was, therefore, a recent production. Then arises the question: If Deuteronomy was not written until six hundred years B. C., when were the other books of the Pentateuch produced? Were they not all written long subsequently to thirty-four hundred years ago? Regarding both of these statements about the mountains, and the fire, and the conversations with the Lord, if a person writing to-day were to make such assertions, he would be discredited at once. We can readily believe a legend that has consistency about it, one that is not so utterly at variance with all our experience; but when a legend, or the record of one, about the improbable is given us for a sober verity, we have a right to be suspicious and to question it.

The legend that when Zoroaster wished to get married his father went in search of a wife for him, and that the son insisted that the young lady should show her face before the espousals, is not hard to believe. It is precisely what any sensible young man would wish to see before the ceremony. Our credulity is not, in such a case, taxed.

Marriage, however, must have been a pleasant condition for him, as we are told that he married three wives; and they were all living in his life time. We frown upon this; but polygamy with the Iranians, as with the Jews, was not only tolerated, but it was approved. David had numerous wives, and Solomon, not to be surpassed, took seven hundred, and for good measure, added three hundred concubines.[7]

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[7] 1st Kings, XI, 3. Solomon alas had so many wives that "they turned away his heart."

§ 5. Zoroaster, by his first wife, had one son and three daughters; by his second, two sons; and by Hvovi, no earthly children were born.[8] But here again, legend comes in, to say that Hvovi shall become the mother of three sons: Hushedar, Hushedar-mah, and Soshyans; all of the seed of the prophet. The angel Neryosang, it is said, took charge of this seed, and a myriad of guardian spirits are protecting it; and by these sons, who are to be born at later and different periods, the renovation of the world will be accomplished. Hushedar is to be born first, and will bring in the first Millennium, at which time the renovation of the universe will take place. He will have a conference with the Lord; and when he comes away from that conference he will far surpass Joshua. For he will say to the swift horse, the sun, "stand still," and the sun will stand still *ten* days and nights. And when he cries "Move on," the sun will move on; and all mankind will then believe in the good religion of Mazda.[9]

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[8] Bund., ch. 32, § 7, and note.

[9] The reader will smile at this foolish nonsense; for he will know that the earth is traveling around the sun at the rate of about 1,580,000 miles each day. Now Joshua halted it only *one* day. He was kind enough to let it move on during the night. He only wanted it to stop long enough for his people to avenge themselves on their enemies. (Joshua X, 13.) Hushedar, evidently, desires a miracle for the purpose of "getting all mankind to believe in the good religion." Bundahis, pp. 231 and 232, Vol. 5, S. B. E. Part 1. Of course, both of these legends are so utterly *false* and *untrue* that comment is unnecessary.

Shakespeare would say, "a plague on both of your houses."

CHAPTER V.

ZOROASTER'S VISION.

§ 1. How long and how deeply Zoroaster pondered the great problems of the future destiny of the human family, before he commenced his crusade against the idolatrous practices which he everywhere saw around him, we cannot definitely state. But if we rely upon those two uncertain guides—Zad-Sparam and Zartust-Nama—he was between fifteen and twenty years old before he became definitely fixed in his opinions, and determined on his course of action.

We recognize at once that he is a man of unsurpassed courage, patience, and determination; for he labors ten years before he secures his first convert. This was his cousin, Medyomah. Perhaps some of those ten years were passed in seclusion, on the mountains already referred to. He may have wandered about the country preaching and teaching the doctrines which he, subsequently, emphasized in the Persian Bible. But we cannot, for a moment believe that in one of those journeys he passed through a sea whose waters receded and fell back to allow him a dry passage. This foolish statement, made in the Zartust-Nama, is probably copied from Second Kings (chapter 2d), where Elijah smote the waters of the Jordan with his mantle and they parted hither and thither, so that he went over on dry land. But if it be found difficult to credit the story of the parting of the

waters, how shall we credit that which is about to follow? We are told that at the age of thirty, while walking in a solitary plain, he caught a vision of Medyona, at the head of a mighty concourse of people, coming from the North. This was a cheering omen to him, that the good religion would yet attract all mankind.

He was then on his way to the river of conference (the Daitu), which he crossed; but this stream did not part its waters for him. He waded it. And just at break of day, as he came up from the water, and was putting on his clothes, he caught sight of the Archangel, Vonu-Mano, approaching him. He was not startled at the vision; for it was in the human form; handsome and elegantly dressed in silk, though it was nine times larger than man.[1] The angel seems to have been aware of the toils, the aspirations and hopes of the Prophet, and has come to show him the splendors of the Eternal Presence. "Whom mayest thou be, and what is thy great desire?" the angel asks, and the Prophet replies: "I am Zartust of the Spitamas; righteousness is my chief desire, and my wish is to know and do the will of the sacred beings, as they show me."

The angel directs the Prophet to lay aside his mortal vestments, his body; that they may proceed to the assembly of the just and confer with the Almighty. This being done, they go forward on foot, for the record is, that Vohumano walked as much in nine steps as Zartust did in ninety. The Iranian heaven has doors, the same as

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[1] We must not be surprised at this, for Isaiah saw the Lord sitting on his throne, high and lifted up. Isaiah, ch. 6. Sacred Book of the East, Vol. 47, p. 156.

the Jewish heaven; there are also windows in the Jewish heaven. But the Jewish heaven further surpasses the Iranian, in that it has horses of different colors.[2]

§ 2. As the Angel and the Prophet approach the Iranian heaven the brilliancy of the Archangels becomes so great that there is not a shadow in that glorious abode. Ormazd is there, presiding. Zartust offers homage to Him and to the Archangels, and takes a seat among them. Here he is initiated into all the mysteries and marvels that will greet the ecstatic soul on the eternal shore.

The Prophet questions the Almighty as to the perfection of the Saints; and Ormazd makes answer, that the first perfection is "good thoughts; the second, good words; and the third, good deeds." And he admonished him, that the carrying out of the commands of the Archangels, is the best of all habits. Then the Lord explained to Zaroaster that the evil spirits practice iniquities, because they love darkness; and their thoughts, words, and deeds, are in eternal divergence and conflict from those loving the light.

Zoroaster is favored with three audiences by the Omniscient One the same day. The Archangels, thereupon, expressed a desire to test his faith by having him *walk through fire,* which he did, and was not burned. They then poured melted metal upon his breast, and he was unharmed. But this was not enough. They slashed his

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[2] Gen., 7. The windows of heaven were opened, etc. Rev., 4, St. John saw a door, and behold it was opened. Rev., 6. He saw horses, red, white and pale, etc. The Iranian heaven is located in Iran. Vol. 47, S. B. E., p. 157.

abdomen, in a vital part, with a knife, so that the blood gushed forth; but the supposed mortal wound was instantly healed by rubbing the hand lightly over it.

Shall we inquire whether these startling, marvelous and incredible statements precede, or are they faint reflections from those other marvelous sayings in the book of Daniel (ch. 3) where Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego are bound, in their coats and hats, and flung into a fiery furnace, heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be heated? And, did those three persons really come forth from that furnace with not a hair of their heads singed, or their garments burned?

Respecting these extreme tests mentioned in the Iranian scriptures I will add that they are set forth to prove that the religion of Ormazd is the true one. So, also, was the furnace-story of Meshach written to prove that the God of the Hebrews was the only true God. For the same reason St. Mark (ch. 16) states that a believer in Jesus may drink any deadly thing, and he shall not be harmed.[3]

The careful reader will at once detect contradictions in this Iranian legend; for let it be borne in mind that Vohumano told Zoroaster to lay aside his body [4] so that he might confer with the Lord. While at that conference the angels tested the Prophet by pouring hot metal on his chest, and by wounding him with a knife, until the blood gushed forth. That writer overlooked the fact that a disembodied spirit hath neither flesh nor blood.

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[3] But the test in Mark seems never to have been made. It is too dangerous to be attempted.

[4] The Dinkard says, Vol. 47, S. B. E., p. 49. Deposit this one garment, meaning the body, the vesture of the soul.

Of course, no sane mind will believe that Zoroaster actually obtained a personal audience with Ormazd, and received by word of mouth from him directions and instructions as to establishing his religion. Did he, like St. John on the Isle of Patmos, in the spirit see these marvels above mentioned? St. John says he saw a throne, and one that sat thereon; and he saw four and twenty seats, and four and twenty elders, clothed in white, sitting upon those seats. He saw, also, seven angels. Now the Iranian Bible has seven amshaspands (angels). Perhaps St. John saw the amshaspands themselves.

§ 3. The earlier Gathas, those believed to have been actually composed by the Prophet, do not go to the extravagant length of St. John in Patmos, or the writers of the Dinkard. Those Gathas are exhortations and prayers, in meter, repeated again and again, of a struggling Saint, who seeks to know how he may approach the Good Mind more devoutly. And the nearest approach to a conference found in them is where the Prophet speaks of the Herald sent to him by Ormazd, and the Herald asks what he most desires? [5] But if we turn our backs upon the Dinkard, the Bundahis, Zad-Sparam, and other like records, we shall have an imperfect picture of early Iranian times, and perhaps of the Prophet himself. If we take the middle ground between an actual conference with Ormazd, and a vision, or trance, whereby the mind sees, or seems to see, objects intangible and invisible to the natural eye, we may well suppose that the Prophet's

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[5] Yasna, 43, § 9.

elysian of joy came to an abrupt end when his enraptured soul returned to his body. For he found that the real battle of life was now to begin.

He was, it must be remembered, thirty years of age, and with great earnestness [6] he began inviting all mankind to the religion of Ormazd. His methods are aggressive; and he boldly announces that he declares doctrines "till then unheard;" [7] and he prays for a "Mighty Kingdom, by whose force he may smite the Lie-demon." He called unto all the world to extol righteousness, and to resist the demons. The demons here mentioned are the Kigs and Karpans, unbelievers and heretics. But when he invited them and the nobles of the realm to the religion of Ormazd, they clamored for his death.

But Tur, called the scanty giver, the ruler of the Province, would not allow the Prophet to be harmed; though neither the "scanty-giver" nor any of his nobles or followers would lend an ear to the new religion.

Zoroaster, in rebuke of his treatment, exclaims on going forth: "I tell thee, thou Tur, and scanty-giver, that thou art a stricken and smitten supplicant for righteousness; a producer of lamentation, worthy of death." [8]

§ 4. He had made the mistake of commencing the reformation of the Iranian religion, by preaching to princes and nobles; they spurned him and thrust him out. Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, and seeing two fishermen, Simon and Andrew, casting their nets, said: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." And straight-

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[6] "With a loud voice." Dink., 7, ch. 4, § 2.

[7] Yasma, 31, §§ 1 and 4.

[8] Dinkard, 7, ch. 4, § 20.

way they followed him. The common people, the poor and the humble are the first to embrace any new-born faith. The nobles and the rich patrician Jews held to Saduceeism long after the masses had changed their faith and become Pharisees. Methodism started in an obscure corner, neither princes nor plutocrats were there. It was born among the poor.

Patrician Romans persistently clung to Paganism generations after the lower classes had become Catholic. Luther, on foot, and on his way to Augsberg to combat Tetzel, and his indulgences, and later leaving by stealth to escape capture and imprisonment, is but a picture made some thousands of years later of Zoroaster escaping with his life from Tur, the scanty-giver. From Tur, the Prophet trudges wearily towards Vadevost, a rich old Karap, who clings to his wealth with all the tenacity of a Morgan or a Rockefeller. Vadevost is living in luxurious splendor, and is the owner of vast herds of cattle and horses. Slaves come and go at his bidding; streams of wealth, from various sources, are pouring in upon him. His rent roll is no doubt large. He is the prototype of the Goulds and the Vanderbilts, of a later period. Zartust asks a gift of some of this wealth for Ormazd; and promises Vadevost further splendor and glory if he complies. With the arrogance of a newly-fledged American Nabob the Karap shouted back, "there is no opulence for me in that. Besides my flocks and herds I have many droves of a thousand swine;[9] I am more opulent than Ormazd himself." For this insolence a retribution,

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[9] He would, to-day, say "there is no money in that." Vol. 47, S. B. E., ch. 4, §§ 24 and 25.

which was to be meted to him after death, was pronounced against him, and he was left for the present with his vanity and his riches.

Thence Zoroaster journeyed to Seistan, on the borders of Afghanistan, and presented himself before Parshad, another provincial chief, and besought him to praise righteousness and resist the demons. To this he consented, but by no insistence would he accept the religion of Mazda. Here, again, the Karpans sought the Prophet's destruction, but he saved himself by chanting the Ahunavair.[10]

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[10] Yatha-ahuna Vairyo (Ahunavair), "The will of the Lord is the law of righteousness. The gifts of Vohu-Mano, to the deeds done in the world for Mazda, etc." This prayer was thought to possess great efficiency in thwarting evil-doers.

CHAPTER VI.

MORE VISIONS, CONFERENCES AND TEMPTATIONS.

All religions deal in the marvelous. It is a marvel if God talked to Moses and Abraham. It is marvelous that the Angels ate Abraham's calf.[1] It is amazing if Elijah could smite the waters of Jordan with his mantle and compel them to roll back hither and thither, so that he could pass. It is a marvel that Jesus could walk upon the waters, and another marvel that after his crucifixion his body could rise up into the sky; that is, if it did?

It is as great a marvel that Zoroaster talked with Ormazd as that Adam and Moses and Abraham talked with God. But preternatural things and preternatural beings make up the volume of all religions. Now, if we brush these all aside, do we not make a great rent in the world? If angels really did appear, and lend a helping hand to the Hebrews, is there any reason why they should withhold their good offices from Zoroaster and his people? It would seem that the Karpans and heretics of Iran needed reformation, as well as the idolatrous Jews. The Iranian Scriptures tell us that Zoroaster had six other

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[1] They not only ate his calf, but they ate his milk and butter. Gen., ch. 18, v. 7 and 8. The angels did not come away without their dinner, for it was in the heat of the day when Abraham sat in his tent; so it must have been noon when they approached him.

conferences with the angels, besides the one already mentioned. The first was with Vohumano, who instructed him as to the care and protection of animals. The next conference was with the angel Asha-Vahista, who enjoined him to guard the sacred fires and places of worship. Then came the angel Shatvar, who directed him as to the preservation of metals, that he might have dominion over them. Spendarmad, the female Archangel, who is also called "Bountiful Devotion" and has charge of the earth, and virtuous women, advised him as to their care.

In the sixth conference, the Spirits of the Seas and Rivers came to instruct him. Lastly, the Spirits of Plants came to him and told him of their care.

These several conferences were held when the Prophet was between thirty and forty years of age. They ended when he was forty, and the places of meeting, of the last ones, were near the southern extremity of the Caspian.[2]

These archangels admonished and warned Zoroaster that the idolaters, the Kavi, Karpans, and skeptics, deaf and blind to the truths he was about to proclaim, would beset his path, and that at every turn the demons would seek his ruin. But the angels gave him assurance that whenever the demons made their assaults he could instantly shatter their schemes and put them to flight by chanting aloud the Ahunavair.[3]

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[2] The Daraga river is mentioned, but the locality of that stream is uncertain.

[3] See note at foot of preceding chapter.

§ 2. People to-day, and all along the centuries, as to their religion, are, and have been, very much like the Kavis and Karpans in that far-off period. Any innovation upon established methods was objected to and was fought to the bitter end. Luther met a similar opposition. Jesus undertook a great reform, and was nailed to a tree. Wyckliffe (B. 1320 A. D.), for preaching and teaching ecclesiastical reforms, died before he could be executed. But after he had lain in his grave thirty years a Catholic council ordered his bones dug up and burned. John Huss, the great Bohemian reformer, for the same reason, as late as 1415 A. D., was publicly burned at the stake, and his ashes were thrown into the Rhine. John Calvin, that blood-thirsty old Presbyterian, about three hundred and fifty years ago, caused Servetus to be cremated on a pile of faggots because he disbelieved in the Trinity.[4] Even up to this hour schismatics are punished by the churches; but the stake and the faggot are superseded by censure and expulsion. Need we, therefore, wonder that Iran's great teacher, in those earlier and more savage times, encountered a fierce and deadly opposition?

§ 3. If we may believe the Vendidad, the Archangel's premonition and promise were soon put to the test; for we are told[5] that Angra-Mainyu (an actual personal devil) sent Biuti, one of his demons, to kill the Prophet, and that the Prophet, to save himself, chanted the Ahunavair.

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[4] If that old bigot were alive to-day, and was to engage in that line of business, he would be obliged to have numerous bonfires.

[5] Ch. 19, Vendidad.

Biuti, on hearing of this, rushed, dismayed away, and reported to Angra-Mainyu, the superior arch-fiend, that the glory of Zartust was so great that it was impossible to kill him.

The same chapter (19) is a riddle of perplexities; for it tells us that the Prophet went forward, swinging stones in his hand, as big as a house, which Ahura-Mazda gave him. Whereat, the devil asked him, "Why dost thou swing those stones? The Prophet answered: "To smite the creations of the devil; to smite idolatry; and I will smite it until the victorious Soshyant shall come up to life." [6] When this threat is made the Devil replies: "By thy mother I was invoked," [7] and he begs Zoroaster not to destroy his creatures and promises him that if he will renounce the good religion of Mazda he will make him the ruler of nations for a thousand years.[8]

This intended bribe is spurned by Zoroaster, who declares, "That not for my life, even should my body be torn, will I renounce the good religion." The Devil is not yet satisfied, and asks, "By whose word and with what weapons wilt thou smite my creatures?" The Saint replies, "O, Angra-Mainyu, evil-doer, the good spirit

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[6] Soshyant is the unborn son of Zoroaster, who is to come bringing resurrection and the restoration of the world.

[7] This sentence plainly implies that Zoroaster's religion was different from his mother's. His was a reformed belief.

[8] That is, he should gain such a boon as Vadhagnd gained, who ruled one thousand years. Vend., 19, § 6. (20) This temptation of the Devil precedes Jesus by a thousand of years.

made the creation. He made it in the boundless time. The sacred cups; the *Haoma;* the *Word;* these are my weapons. By these will I strike and repel thee."[9]

§ 4. It must be borne in mind that the Vendidad was composed after Zoroaster's period. Our Gospels were likewise composed long after Jesus' death, and they are supposed to reflect what happened to their great actor.[10]

Now, as to Zoroaster, if anything is certain, it is that he speaks in the Gathas; and they bear the same stern impress of what is said in the Vendidad. However, these lines from the Iranian source must not be passed lightly by. That temptation there set forth is the great prototype and pattern of others that have followed. These others are believed to be copies, dressed up a little, to meet changed times and conditions; yet they are written in books, and hundreds of millions of people believe and trust in the copies, but not the original.

Let us see as to this. About five hundred years B. C. Gautama, the Buddha, who lived centuries later than Zoroaster, started out to lead a life of penance, fasting and prayer. He had not gone far when suddenly Mara, the evil one, appeared, hovering over him, in the sky. This devil, seeming to know the purpose of Gautama, called out to him, saying, "You are a prince of earth;

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[9] The followers of Jesus use the sacred cup, with wine, for their Homa; and St. John's mention of the *Word* finds its antecedent here in the Parsee religion, long before Galilee, and the crucifixion were heard of.

[10] The first Gospel composed after the death of Jesus was written A. D. 90, and one hundred years elapsed before we had any such Gospels. The truth is three of the Gospels were written in the second century.

do not go away and lead the life of a mendicant. If you will return to your father's palace, I will, in seven days, make you a Monarch. You shall rule over four great continents." The bribe or temptation failed, and Buddha led a life of sanctity. Thus the truth or legend of the Vendidad had traveled along with passing generations, keeping step with the ages, and was finally written as a fact into Hindu records. To-day more than three hundred and fifty millions of people believe in this transplanted legend.

§ 5. But myths and legends lose nothing by lapse of years. This same legend, slightly varied, looms high in the New Testament.[11] Let us, for a moment, carefully, and with reverence, examine it. We are told that "Jesus was led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil." We are not told who led him up. Did the evil one? Now, he was led up on purpose to be tempted; but what was the purpose of this temptation? Was it to see if he would lapse and abandon his high mission, or was it to set an example for all time that men should resist, when tempted?

After forty days of fasting the devil, knowing that he was weak and exhausted from his long vigil, came and took him up into the Holy City and sat him on a pinnacle of the temple. A pinnacle, we know, is a slender turret, or cupola, elevated above the rest of the building. How the devil got Jesus up there we are not told. Did he climb a ladder? Did he carry him? He may have dragged him; he may have coaxed him; he may have seized him; and hustled him through the air. But when

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[11] Matthew, ch. 4.

he got him up there, he sat him on the pinnacle. How long he sat there we are not told. It was at least a very prominent place to be sitting. Did any one see him sitting there? It was at a dangerous height. Somebody must have observed this strange performance. There sits Jesus, at that dizzy height, on the pinnacle of the temple; but as he was a carpenter he may have climbed to such awful elevations before. Zoroaster, we are told, went forward swinging stones in his hands, as big as a house, to smite the wicked one.[12] It must not be overlooked that all these devils are represented as living, acting, and talking. It is plain that Zoroaster possessed a more warlike spirit than did Jesus; for he would smite the devil; but Jesus merely said, "Get thee hence, Satan."

When Buddha was tempted, angels came to his assistance, and frightened the fiends away. In the temptation of Jesus, the devil is not yet satisfied; for he takes him from the pinnacle of the temple up into an exceeding high mountain, and shows him all the Kingdoms of the World, and he offers them all to him if he will fall down and worship him.

Now, here are three supposed great temptations, to three great religious teachers. Worldly possessions, extravagantly great, are offered in each instance. Zoroaster is offered a thousand years' rule; Buddha could hold the scepter over four great continents, and Jesus was offered all the Kingdoms of the World and the glory of them. The Parsees, millions of them, have believed that Angra-Mainyu (the Devil) offered Zoroaster a thousand years of worldly dominion. Millions of Buddhists are

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[12] Ante, § 2.

certain that Mâra (the Devil) offered Buddha the rule of four great continents; and millions of Jesus' followers believe that the Devil offered him all the Kingdoms of the World. But the Christians do not believe that Angra-Mainyu held the above dialogue with Zartust; nor do they think that Mâra proffered to Buddha four great continents. On the other hand, the Buddhists are sure that Mâra actually appeared in the sky, to Gautama, with that tempting bait. In short, neither of these peoples believe the creed of the others. Their own, in their opinion, is the right one; every other is a heresy. Now, if majorities count in this matter, the Buddhists hold the correct views; for they outnumber the others vastly,[13] and they are steadfast in their faith.

Are there not grave improbabilities against the actualities of all three of these legends? We are careful not to affirm that they did happen; nor shall we say they did *not* happen. The credulous, in each of these religions, will follow their own creed, and dispute and reject all the others. But while we must admit that the poets, who wrote these things, allowed a loose rein to their imaginations; yet, are not the lessons they taught, that we must ever resist temptation worthy of a place in all religions?

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[13] The Buddhists number about 400 millions. The Christians, including Catholics, about 150 or 160 millions.

CHAPTER VII.

ARYAN CUSTOMS AND RELIGION.

Having now reached that point where we find Zoroaster devoting his life to the religious instruction of his people, it is important that we make brief inquiry into their lives, habits and customs. And as his struggle is to establish a new religion, we ought to know something of that which he sought to displace. The certain facts are meager, but it is undisputed that he came from that great prolific Aryan family which for thousands of years has ruled and mastered all the other races upon the earth.

At Zoroaster's period the Aryans in Iran and Bactria were no longer nomads. They lived in houses and led settled lives. They were further advanced than Abraham, who lived in a tent, and was a wandering nomad; and this, at a time when the Iranians were cultivating their fields. The Aryans owned cattle, and horses, pigs, and fowls. And having passed beyond the nomadic period, to that of tillers of the soil, they thought themselves more noble than roving nomads. In fact, Arya, in Sanscrit, means noble; and the word Iran, is simply a later name for Aryan, which probably came from the root Ar—to plow. It was more than one thousand years after Abraham's day that Isaiah mentioned "the young Asses that ear the ground"; that is plow or Ar the ground.[1]

While it is probably true that a great share of the

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[1] Isaiah, ch. 30, v. 24.

wealth of the old Aryans consisted in herds of cattle, yet, at the time of the Prophet, the pastoral was secondary to the agricultural life. They had surely progressed beyond Genesis (ch. 4); for Abel, "a keeper of sheep," was approved above Cain, a tiller of the ground. The Aryans held "the thrifty toiler in the fields in higher esteem than the keeper of flocks."

It is plain that those Aryans, six or seven thousand years [2] ago, were further advanced than Adam in his day. Geology and Philology join hands in proof of this. They had houses with doors; they plowed the fields; they were clothed; and they made pottery. Glue and pitch were known to them. They made their bread with yeast. They had wagons, and hammers, and anvils. They had stone mortars, in which to pound their grain. Later on they had iron mortars. We know this, because they used words which mention, and describe all these things. But they lived at a time when law and order were not as well established as to-day.

We smile at their childish superstitions, which led them to believe that, in the gloom of night, witches and ghosts swarmed in the air, and that demons stalked abroad with evil intent.

§ 2. The sun dispelled that gloom; and what more reasonable than to give thanks to it. The Aryans, like Joshua, believed that the sun, instead of the earth, moved; therefore the sun had life.

The waters in the rivers were moving; the clouds above were drifting across the sky; the sun traveled all day long; in short, they all moved; and as the Aryan could

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[2] Yasna, 31, § 10.

move, because he had life, he reasoned that they, like himself, must be living things. They were believed to be persons, infinitely greater than himself; and in his time of trouble, and hour of need, he addressed them for help. They were deities; and he prayed to them as such; but among them all, the sun was the supreme or highest God. He called him Dyaus, the shining God, or God of Light. The Greeks, later, called this God Zeus. The Veda mentions him as Dyaus-pater or Heaven-God. It is but a step beyond this Heaven-God, to say Heavenly Father. In the later Avesta, this Dyaus is called Mithra, the Lord of wide pastures, who hath a thousand ears, and ten thousand eyes. He knows the truth, and he seeth all things; and the wretch who would lie unto him would bring ruin upon the whole country. He is called, also, the undying, shining, swifthorsed sun; and the Aryans believed that if he should not rise up, then the Daevas (devils) would destroy all things, and the angels or good spirits would not be able to withstand them. Sacrifices and libations were offered unto this "Lord of the wide pastures"; for he was the first of the heavenly Gods who lit up the beautiful summits of Hara, and "from thence, with a beneficent eye, looked over the abode of the Aryans." [3]

Now, if this later Avesta was written about six hundred years before Jesus' day, the Jews were similarly engaged; for they were "burning incense unto Baal; to the sun; and to the moon and the planets; and to all the hosts of Heaven." But Josiah, with great rigor,

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[3] Mihir Yast, § 13.

punished the Jews for their idolatry. He slew the priests, burned the images, and burned the bones of the priests, on their overturned altars. Nevertheless, with all his murderous cruelty and barbarity, he performed one pious act; for he destroyed Tophet, in the valley of Hinnon, that no man might thereafter cause his son or daughter to pass through the fire to Moloch.[4]

§ 3. Those early Iranians were merely the antetypes of all the tribes and nations to this day. Man is a quarrelsome, fighting animal; and if the dark side of this story must be told, the Aryan tribes and clans often engaged in bloody, cruel and desolating wars. It was with them, as with later peoples; until such time as it became profitable to retain prisoners of war as slaves, they were barbarously murdered. In truth, this old earth has been cursed with slavery almost from man's day of coming. The inspired word of God, directed the Jews to purchase their bondsmen, from the heathen round about them.[5] If we may really suppose that to be a direction from Heaven, and the Aryan ignorantly followed it, they of course did no wrong. Now, if Zoroaster lived about the time of this Leviticus order, he probably saw its fulfillment many times over. The ancient Aryans, however, either originated or copied a system of tyranny, which followed on down to the days of Rome. In each family a petty despotism prevailed. The house-father held the keys of life and death. He possessed the power to sell his sons and daughters; to banish them; to marry them to whom he wished, or to destroy them at will. If the house-father

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[4] 2d Kings, ch. 23.
[5] Leviticus XXV., 44.

was worshipped, it was probably two or three generations back; far enough at least for time to have erased all memory of his tyrannical acts.[6]

The old Aryans were gifted with fervid imaginations, and from them have sprung all the great poets and writers of the world. They saw the clouds, like creatures of life, flying across the heavens; and they named them the cows of the sky; for they dropped their milk (the rain) to the earth, which made the woods and hills green with verdure.

If the clouds did not appear, and the earth became dry, parched and barren, they fancied that the evil one had imprisoned them in some corner or mountain fastness.[7]

The cow, as one of the means of honorable support to the Aryan family, was held in high esteem. This love of that animal traveled west, penetrated Syria, and there, on the top of the pillars of a great temple, was sculptured more than twenty-five hundred years ago the recumbent form of a cow.

It may seem childish that the Aryans should sacrifice to the cows of the sky, but mankind, all along the centuries, has been following the myths, fictions and fables of his imagination, or worshipping idols made by his

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[6] The Jews, in the fifth commandment, are directed to "Honor their fathers and mothers, that their days may be long in the land." Exodus, 20, 12.

[7] This same old fable was carried across the mountains to the Indus, and when I come to speak of Buddha, and his religion, it will there be seen that Indra, one of the Hindu Gods, destroyed the monster Vritra and released the cows.

own hands. The Jews prostrated themselves before Aaron's golden calf; and the leaven of that lump seems to have permeated, to this day, the whole family of man.

The old Aryans did not lack for deities; they had multitudes of them. Haoma, a creature of their own hands, was one of their earliest. Far back, beyond the days of Zoroaster; back before the Rig-Veda was composed; back more than five thousand years ago; in that distant age, while yet the future Hindu and the future Iranian were one people, they brewed from a vine or plant, a liquor, called Haoma, which when drank, produced a sort of exhilaration or ecstasy.

§ 4. The Hindus, after the separation, called it Soma. It was made from the Hom plant, a small bush or vine somewhat resembling the milk bush of India.[8]

It is probable that the drinking of Hom-juice produced more than mere ecstasy; for the Hindus, subsequently, used this beverage on going into battle, as a stimulant to their courage. Our estimation of it may not be very exalted, but the old Aryans considered it of great virtue and efficacy. They used it in religious rites and ceremonies, and called it "the Holy One, driving death afar." All other intoxicants, they said, "go hand in hand with rapine of the bloody spear; but Homa's stirring power goes hand in hand with friendship."

Zoroaster did not believe in this; for he prayed Mazda and asked: "When will men drive hence this polluted, drunken joy, whereby the Karpans with their angry

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[8] In ch. 3, § 1, we have seen that Zoroaster was produced by his parents drinking cow's milk and Hom-juice infused.

zeal would crush us? and by this inspiration the tyrants of the provinces hold their evil rule."[9]

We ask, do the professed Christians of the present day copy, in the Eucharist, this ancient Homa usage? It was in the world as a thanksgiving feast, long centuries before the Lord's Supper was instituted. Did Jesus and his followers copy this old Aryan custom?

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[9] Yasma, 48:10. The Karpans or Kavi, we have seen, were unbelievers in Zoroaster's gospel. They were his bitter enemies all his life; and one of them finally slew him. Dinkard, B. 8, ch. 35, note 3.

CHAPTER VIII.

VISTASPA—ZOROASTER IN PRISON.

§ 1. As we shall hereafter see Vistaspa's name frequently mentioned in connection with Zoroaster's, it may be well to here notice some of the foolish legends concerning him. In the Persian Bible, Vistaspa is frequently called a king; but he was not a king of any noted province or realm. He was at most only a petty chief, or king of a small tribe or clan. This is all that can be rightly claimed for him; and even this rests upon sandy foundations, unless we believe Lactantius, who makes him an ancient king of Media, centuries before the founding of Rome.

Persian history does not mention him. Median history is silent about him; and it is only the colossal figure of Zoroaster that rescues him from oblivion.

Now, if we allow that the Prophet's time was coeval with the Rig-Veda, we must place Vistaspa and Frashostra, and others mentioned in the Gathas there also. If Vistaspa lived in Seistan, down on the borders of Afghanistan, or at Bactria or Media, then Frashostra, and Gamaspa, and the Prophet were there also.

Tradition tells us that when the Prophet presented himself at the court of Vistaspa, he encountered every possible kind of opposition. First, he had a long debate, lasting two or three days, with the most learned of the realm, about his new religion. They propounded thirty-

three questions to him; and he, having come off victorious, his antagonists scheme and plot against him until he is thrown into prison and left to starve. This part of the story has many duplicates and counterparts, even down to a late period; for innovators, upon old creeds and beliefs, have always found the Karpans and Tetzels arrayed against them. The seer had now been at Vistaspa's court two years; laboring zealously for his conversion, but evil influences had overborne him vastly. He was condemned and in prison, for righteousness' sake. But no angel came at night, as in Peter's case,[1] to loose his bands and lead him forth. Even Vohu-Mano seems to have neglected him. His sufferings in prison, in heavy fetters, and from starvation, are so great that his hearing grows dull, his vision becomes impaired, his legs refuse to bear up his wasted body, he is so tortured with hunger and thirst that he is ready to collapse.[2]

It would look as though the end were not far off; but now comes a miracle by which he is released. Vistaspa owns a beautiful horse, whose legs, at this time, are so drawn up to his body that it is impossible for him to move. In some way the Prophet, in his cell, learns of this and sends word to the King that he will, on four certain conditions, restore his charger. The King, anxious about his favorite, inquires the terms, which are: that one fore-leg will be released, if he will accept the new faith. This agreed to, Zoroaster fervently prays for the restoration of the horse, and the fore-leg immediately comes down. The next stipulation is that Isfander, the

[1] Acts, 12.
[2] Dinkard 7, ch. 4, § 67.

King's son, shall do battle for the new religion. This agreed to, one of the hind legs is healed. For another leg, the prisoner stipulates the conversion of Hutaosa, the Queen. Lastly, the Prophet demands the names of his false accusers, and that they be punished; which, being done, the horse is instantly restored.

This story, which may be one for casuists to consider, and probably reject, hath, at least, as much semblance of truth about it as that concerning Peter, when he was escaping from prison; that the gates thereof "opened of *their own accord,*" and let him out.[3] Either the imaginations of the poets, who detailed these adventures, had much to do with the escapes of Peter and Zoroaster, or angels, truly, must have assisted them. The reader, learned or unlearned, will have no difficulty in deciding.

§ 2. Immediately after Zoroaster's release from prison, we are told, that Mazda, the Lord, sent three Archangels, Vohuman, Asha-Vahista and Burzhim-Mitro (the angel of fire) to Vistapa to encourage him, or as it were, to brace him up in the new faith. The radiance or effulgence of these angels is so astounding that the king and all his court are shaken with fear. Seeing his trepidation, Burzhim-Mitro bespoke his assurance that the angelic envoys were not sent to do him ill; but to promise him a long life and a prosperous reign on condition that he shall push forward the faith preached by Zoroaster. "But," added the angel, "thou must chant the Ahunavair; thou must not worship demons; thy reliance must be upon the new religion. We promise thee an immortal

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[3] Acts,12, 10.

son, Peshyton, who shall be hungerless and thirstless; predominant both here, and with the Spirits. We will give unto thee a long sovereignty of one hundred and fifty years. But if thou wilt not praise the good and pure religion, of the righteous Zaratust, we will not convey thee up on high. Vultures will devour thy body; the earth shall drink thy blood."

Now, these angels either finding that the prince spread an elaborate table, or that he must be further admonished, conclude to take up their abode with him.[4]

Ormazd, knowing that this acceptance of the religion, by Vistaspa, will provoke an invasion of his realm by Arjasp, and the Khyons, sends the angel Neryosang to draw aside the veil of the future, and allow the prince to catch a glimpse of his own glory and the discomfiture of his enemies. This oriental picture is not yet complete. Marzda sends Asha Vahista, the foremost angel in holiness, who bears a most beautiful saucer, the finest that can be made for royalty, and this is filled with a magical nectar, fit for the Gods, which Vistaspa quaffs. His vision thereby is instantly so amplified that he is enabled to see the rapturous spot set apart for him in Paradise. Nor are his family and court overlooked. They are either endowed with universal wisdom or they are made invulnerable to the assaults of their enemies.

§ 3. One of these pledges, we know, did not come true; for Isfander, Vistasps' son, at this princely and angelic gathering, sought to have his body made invulnerable to the shafts of the enemy, that he might do battle

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[4] Dinkard 8, 11, 3. Dk. 7, 4, 76 to 86.

more effectively for the new religion. For that purpose he was given a drink of Pomegranate. But the angelic promise, and the Pomegranate, both failed him in dire time of need; for he was afterward slain, as we shall see, while doing valiant battle for the new religion, which he had so heartily espoused.

If asked the dates of these supposed angelic visits, I am totally unable to make answer. For the Avesta, and in fact all ancient Iranian writings, are lamentably deficient in chronology. It is difficult to account for this, except on the theory that the people of Iran were, as were the authors of Veda, deficient in their organs of eventuality.[5] Or it may have been that no great event or epoch in their history furnished a starting point from which to date their records. In fact, the ancient Persians kept no dates; even their Holy Book, the Avesta, their Bible, is silent as to when and where it was composed. Nor does it mention the birthplace of Zoroaster, its great and world-famous apostle.

The Jews, more considerate of Abraham, their own

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[5] The Rig-Veda is an old record, having an established antiquity of 4,100 to 4,300 years, and perhaps even beyond that. It is, in short, the Hindu Bible. The word Veda means knowledge, and the Hindus claim that their prophets, or seers, heard (Sruti) the words there written as uttered by Brahma (their God). It dates back beyond the flood. In fact, when Noah was gathering the animals into the Ark (?), the Hindu priests were composing their Bible. The Hindus being a religious people, there was no occasion to *drown them*; for they were worshipping God the best they knew. The flood, therefore, did not reach India, nor did it touch Egypt.

first great teacher, tell us of his birthplace; they mention his ancestry, and they follow him with considerable particularity from Ur of the Chaldees, to the closing scene in the field of Ephron. Zoroaster was not so fortunate, hence the interminable disputes, as to when and whence he came.

CHAPTER IX.

ZOROASTER READS THE AVESTA TO VISTASPA. SOSHYANS TO BE BORN OF A VIRGIN, AND TO BRING ON THE RESSURRECTION OF THE DEAD. THE FOOD OF THE RESURRECTED.

§ 1. In the preceding chapter many marvelous and questionable things are related about the conversion of Vistasp. But, shall we call it marvelous, if Persian records mention Zoroaster in the same manner that the Pentateuch speaks of Moses? Now, the Persians say that God taught their Holy Book, the Avesta, to their Prophet. They insist that God said to Zoroaster: "Go and read to Vistasp this Sacred Book, that he may come unto the faith. Keep all my counsel, and repeat it word by word to him."

In obedience to this command Zoroaster went to the court of Vistasp, where he called down a blessing upon him. He said: "I bless thee, O, Man! Lord of the country, I pray thee to live a good life, an exalted life, that thou mayest live long. May sons be born unto thee! Mayest thou have a son as wise as Gamaspa;[1] may he bless thee! Mayest thou be glorious and strong, like Keresaspa, wise without fault; rich in cattle, and rich in horses. Mayest thou be holy, beloved by Mazda, and reverenced by men. Mayest thou follow the law of truth,

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[1] Gamaspa was Prime Minister, and had early embraced the new religion.

conquer thy foes, have fulness of welfare, and be freed from death, like King Khosrav, who went alive into the blissful abode of the Holy Ones." [2]

The Prophet then read to him the Avesta, and said: "Learn its truths, and walk therein. If thy desire is towards its laws, thy abode shall be in the Paradise of heaven. But if thou turnest away from its commandments, thou wilt bring down thy crowned head to the dust. God will be displeased with thee, and thou wilt surely be overthrown, and at the last thou shalt descend into hell. Listen, then, O King, to the counsel of the Almighty." [3]

Thereupon, Zoroaster offered up a sacrifice by the river Daitu, with Homa and meat, and baresma[4] and libations; and "with words rightly spoken," that he might bring the Kavi (King) Vistaspa to think and speak and

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[2] King Khosrav, like Enoch and Elijah, got into heaven without dying. Three very fortunate ones. But, did they? If so, then we take our bodies to heaven.

[3] Vol. 23, S. B. E., Vistasp-Yast.

[4] The Baresma ceremony of purification, when a man or woman had become unclean, through contact with the dead, or other defilement, differs, somewhat, from the purification ceremony in Leviticus; but the object is the same. The Persian priest cut a handful of twigs, from a dry clean part of the earth, and while holding them in his hand, recited parts of the liturgy; during which he washed the twigs and tied them together with the Kusti or girdle. The unclean person was then sprinkled on the head and jaws; then the right ear, then the left, etc. It was a silly ceremony, and on a par with the foolish cleanings in Leviticus. There the tip of the right ear was touched with the blood of the slain lamb (Leviticus, ch. 14); then the thumb of the right hand;

act according to the law of the Lord.[5] He offered a similar sacrifice for the conversion of Hutaosa, Vistasp's queen, and prayed that she might spread the Holy Mazdean law throughout all the world. These sacrifices were most probably offered before Zoroaster visited Vistaspa; or about the time he set out on that dangerous and trying mission. One thing is certain; that he faced a long and arduous struggle in establishing his creed.

We have seen that he encountered such fierce opposition, that it was ten years before he secured Medyomah, his cousin, as a follower. One convert in ten years was surely a severe test of his courage, his zeal, and his patience. That he was a "Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," none who will ponder his words, will dispute. Listen to his mournful plaint. It is the voice of one crying in the wilderness: "To what land shall I turn? aye, turning, whither shall I go? On the part of kinsman, prince or peer[6] none to give offerings; none to help my cause; nor yet the throngs of labor; still less the evil tyrants of the provinces. How, then, O Lord, shall I establish the faith? My following is scant, therefore, I cry unto Thee, O Lord, desiring helpful grace.

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then the great toe of the right foot. But the Jewish priest *got a dinner* from the meat offering (Leviticus, ch. X, 12). Which of these foolish ceremonies preceded the other? Will the reader answer?

[5] Was the river Daitu in Bactria? If so, it helps to fix the birthplace of the prophet. Abah-Yast, § 105; Gos-Yast, § 25; S. B. E., Vol. 23.

[6] He had married Frashostra's daughter, and Frashostra was a peer of the realm; but had not yet embraced the faith.

When is the Savior, Soshyans, with his lofty revelations, and plans for the renovation of the universe, to appear?" These are words of gloom and waning hope; but in a moment the spirit of resistance comes; for the Prophet was a man of courage, and did not scruple to use force, to overthrow or destroy those hostile to him. He lived in perilous and warfare times. The authorities were against him and his creeds; and he exclaims: "Whoever will hurl the evil governor from power or from life, makes for the general good."

§ 2. As to this Soshyans, mentioned above, a word must be said. According to the later Avesta, the Dinkard, the Bundahis, Zad-Sparam and other works; Husadar, Husadar-Mah, and Soshans, are three unborn sons of Zoroaster; and a myriad of angels are protecting his seed. Wonderful fictions are told of what these sons are to do and perform. They are to be *born of virgins;* and Husedar and Husedar-mah are to appear at different times, or millenniums, to renovate and restore the earth. But in the *fullness of time,* Soshans is to appear. He will be born of a virgin, the same as Jesus. Her name is Eredat-Fedhri.[7] She bathes in the sea of Zara, in Seistan, conceives, and Soshans is born.

"He will make glad the whole world. He will be called Astvat-Erata; for he will make bodily creature rise up. He will restore the world, which will, thereafter, never grow old and never die, but ever increasing. Creation shall grow deathless; the Drug (the devil), though he may rush on every side to kill the holy beings, yet he

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[7] Yast 13, § 62, and note 2.

and his evil brood shall perish. It is the will of the Lord."[8]

§ 3. The resurrection of the dead is of such stupendous importance that it eclipses all other questions. It demands, therefore, from every one the most serious consideration.

Zoroaster taught that all good thoughts, good words and deeds, will reach Paradise;[9] that all evil thoughts, words and deeds drag the soul toward the abode of the demons. And he prayed: "O Mazda! Most beneficent Spirit! Maker of the Universe! How shall I free the world from the Drug, that evil doer? How shall I drive away defilement? And the answer came: "Invoke my Fravashi (Spirit), whose soul is the Holy Word."[10]

The final happiness of the just, and the discomfiture of the wicked, is repeated again and again, all through Zoroaster's writings; but he does not, in direct and unequivocal language, teach the resurrection of the *body*. That senseless and fallacious doctrine is a plant of later growth. But the resurrection of the *body* is plainly and distinctly taught by later Persian priests. "The dead," they say, "shall rise up, and life shall come to the *bodies*; and they shall keep the breath." All the bodily world shall become free from old age and death, from corruption and rot, forever and forever.[11] Soshans, by order of Ormazd, will give to every man the reward and recompense of his deeds.[12]

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[8] Farvadin Yast, § 129, S. B. E., Vol. 23, p. 220; Zamyad Yt., § 89.

[9] Westengard fragments, p. 247, Vol. 4, S. B. E.

[10] Vend. Fargard, 19, §§ 37 and 38.

[11] Zend. fragments, p. 253, Vend.

[12] Bund., ch. 30, § 27

It must be admitted that if the dead are to be resurrected, with the stomach and internal parts as they now are; the eternal bread-and-butter question will confront the resurrected world; and it did confront those Iranian writers. They saw the dilemma, and solved it, as follows: They said in the Millennium of Hushedra-Mah, the strength of appetite will diminish, so that men can remain three days and nights in superabundance, with one taste of food. That by dieting down from meat to milk, and milk to water, they can, even before Soshans comes, remain ten years without food and not die.[13]

The Jews in Jesus' day did not all believe in the resurrection. The Sadducees said there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit. The Pharisee confessed both.[14] But Jesus said, "the resurrected are the children of God"; and that those accounted *worthy of resurrection,* do not marry; neither can they die any more; they are equals unto the angels."[15] But if only those "accounted worthy of resurrection" are to be resurrected, is there not a very plain implication that the unworthy will remain in the gloomy underworld? The book of Wisdom (ch. 2) tells us that death came into the world through envy of the Devil. But whence came this great consoling thought, that mankind will escape the darkness and the eternal silence of the grave? The answer is ready: It came from the Persians, and it was taught them by the founder of their religion, Zoroaster. We leave this matter here for the present, to be further considered in a subsequent chapter.

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[13] Bund., ch. 30, §§ 1 to 5.

[14] Matt. 22, 23; Acts 23, 8.

[15] Luke 20, v. 27 to 36, plainly implies that only the *just shall* be resurrected.

CHAPTER X.

THE KINVAD BRIDGE.

§ 1. The evils which Zoroaster's enemies would bring upon him and his followers, he prays may be borne back against them, and that no help shall keep them from misery. This would seem to be the law of "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." But directly the good mind possesses him, and he asks how he may adore the Bountiful Lord; and with what words he shall teach the people. He makes bold the promise that the man or woman who will teach the words of life he will lead on, even to the Judge's Bridge. And that when they approach that Bridge, the believing ones will go forth firmly with him as a guide. But the Karpans and Kavi (heretics and unbelievers), whose lives are loaded with evil deeds, their own souls and consciences will meet them at the Bridge, and will there condemn and decry them. They shall miss the path and fall; and "in the Lie's abode shall their habitation be." But for the penitent, there is hope; "even their former foes, the tribes and kith of the Turanians"; if they will accept the faith, shall not fall from the Bridge; "but with the Lord, they shall dwell in joyful peace."[1]

The Kinvad Bridge, or Judge's Bridge, being the final assize of the departed soul, deserves especial notice.

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[1] Yasna 46, S. B. E. Vol. 31.

The Iranians believed that the first mountain that rose up out of the earth was Alborz;[2] and from the top of this mountain, which they supposed reached around the earth, stretched the Kinvad Bridge. The span reached from earth to the eternal shore.

The Iranians believed that in this life all wicked thoughts, wicked words and wicked deeds, were charged up by the angels against the offender, and as a balance or offset against these sins he received a credit in the book of accounts, for all good thoughts, good words and good deeds; and if the balance was found in his favor he could pass the Bridge in safety.[3] Dogs were there to tear the wicked. The Jewish or English Bible also has dogs outside for the same purpose.[4] But Matthew has a gate, with a *narrow* way, leading up to it; and only a few can find the gate. The way to destruction, however, has a broad road and a great, wide gate, "and many there be who go in thereat."[5] At Kinvad Bridge Angels watched at the earthly end to welcome the souls of the just. In the middle of this Bridge, and beneath it, was the gate of Hell. Demons lurked there to snatch their own.[6]

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[2] The same a Hara Berezaiti; supposed to be the mountain range south of the Caspian Sea.

[3] The Egyptians copied this.

[4] Revelation 22, 14 and 15.

[5] Matt. VII, 13 and 14. The writers of the Gospels and Revelation, probably copied from the Avesta, and changed the Bridge into Gates.

[6] It is probable that some of these sayings about this Bridge were grafted into the Persian Bible after Zoroaster's day. His punishment was mental, as we shall see.

When one of the faithful departed this life, his soul, for three days and nights, was believed to linger near the body, singing the Gathas,[7] meanwhile tasting as much pleasure as the whole living world could taste. At the end of the third night the soul of the just, amid plants and flowers, and sweet scented zephyrs, reached, at dawn, the all-happy mountain Alborz and the Bridge. Here his own conscience, advancing in the form of a beautiful maid, fair as the fairest of earth, met him.[8] She addressed him thus: "O thou Youth, of good thoughts, good words and good deeds, I am thy own conscience. Thou didst love the good religion. When thou didst see a man deriding holy things, or engaged in idolatry, or shutting the door in the face of the poor, then thou didst sing the Gathas, and didst worship Atar, the son of Mazda (the Lord)[9] and didst rejoice the faithful from near and from far.

The Bridge for the righteous widens to the length of nine javelins; that is, about forty-nine feet; and the happy soul, in safety, passes to the land of the leal. Here, Vohuman, the angel of good thoughts, the doorkeeper of Paradise, greets him. The righteous one, the perfume of whose soul makes devils to tremble, thereupon takes up his abode with the angels forever more.

We need not smile at this, for our own Heaven hath

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[7] The Gathas are chanted, and are somewhat similar to the Psalms of the English Bible.

[8] Yast XXII, S. B. E. Vol. 23.

[9] In the Persian Bible Mazda has a *son,* Atar, but he also has a *daughter,* Ashi-Vanguhi. Yast, 17, p. §. 2.

doors, windows and gates.[10] Daniel wanted to be a doorkeeper in the House of the Lord, and Nathan told David he was a murderer, for he killed Uriah, the Hittite, in order to get his wife (2d Samuel, 12), and David did not, at last accounts, become a doorkeeper.

§ 2. With the wicked it is the reverse of all this. When he dies his soul, for three nights, lamenting, cries out: "To what land shall I turn? Whither shall I go? And on that night his soul tastes as much suffering as the whole living world can taste. At the end of the third night, when the dawn appears, it seems to the unfaithful one, as if he were brought, amidst snow and stench,[11] and as if a wind were blowing from the north, foul scented, which he sorrowfully inhales.

The Arda-Viraf has it that the soul of the wicked is met by a horrid old woman, who is, in fact, his own misshapen, perverted conscience. She is naked, decayed, profligate, lean-hipped and ugly beyond measure. She is hideous, noxious and filthy, and she bars his way. She confronts him. "Who art thou?" the wicked one asks: "than whom I never saw an uglier or more horrid looking creature, of Ahriman (the Devil) than thy hideous features present." With a hateful leer, the drab makes reply: "I am thy bad actions; I am hideous and vile; but I am thy evil thoughts, thy evil words, thy evil deeds. Thou wast a worker of iniquity. When thou sawst

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[10] Doors. Psalms 84, 10. Doors. St. John 10, 1. Gates. Matt. VII, 13. "The windows of heaven were opened." Genesis VII, 10 and 11.

[11] The Persian hell was in the North; but some place it in the center of the earth.

those of the good religion in the service of God, thou didst practice the will of the demons. Thou wast avaricious, and didst shut the door in the face of the poor. Though I am wicked, abandoned and unholy, I have been made more frightful by thee. I am sent to the Northern regions of the demons, but thy evil thoughts, and words, and deeds, have driven me to a farther verge."

The soul of the wicked one, now raging fiercely, presents itself at the Kinvad Bridge. A concourse of demons, at the gate of hell, are on the watch. The dogs snarl at him, and tear him. The drab continues to chide him, and as he enters the way of the Bridge, it shrinks and narrows to a razor's edge. He hesitates; he falters; the awful chasm below terrorizes him; hideous, frightful forms leer at him. Faint with fear, he drops into the awful abyss, where the demons seize him and drag him to their dark abode.

This is the lowest or worst hell.[12] The Dadistin (ch. 33), divides hell into three grades. In the first, or easiest hell, the sins have not been very grievous, there having been some good thoughts, and good words, and good deeds; the soul is held in a dark, ill-smelling place. In the second hell, the sins have been of a deeper hue, with very few good thoughts to balance against them. This place is not only dark and stenchy, but the demons are there, and the sinner gets neither peace nor comfort. The third hell is where the sins have been excessive, terrible and awful, with no good thoughts or works what-

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The Jews had, also, "the lowest hell." This may have been copied, in part, from Deuteronomy, ch. 32, v. 22.

ever, and he goes to the most gloomy, the deepest and darkest abode of all.

§ 3. But there was a place called (Hamistaken) ever stationary, where the soul, whose good words and works just fairly balanced the evil; such a soul was halted at the Bridge, and is to remain there until the renovation of the universe.

These hells seem terrible and startling; but did not Jesus describe a more fearful place? He says he will send forth his angels and "gather all those who do iniquity, and cast them *into a furnace of fire,* and there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." The angels shall sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into a *furnace of fire.*[13] The righteous shall then shine forth as the sun, in the kingdom of their father. In the Persian Bible the righteous pass to the golden seat of the Lord.[14]

This hell of Jesus seems to be more of a *material hell* than the Iranian pit; for he speaks of "the gnashing of teeth"; and a soul, or spirit, as we understand it, will hardly have such things as teeth. Or does he mean that he casts the material body, teeth and all, into the furnace of fire? Now, a furnace of fire would soon reduce the body, including the teeth, to dust and ashes. It is certainly noteworthy that the two heavens are exactly alike, the hells only being dissimilar. But of the two hells, the Persian is, by far, the more humane and merciful, for a

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[13] Matt. XIII, 42 to 50. See Deut. 32, 22, for the lowest hell.

[14] Vend. 19, 32.

dark, stenchy place, however horrible, must be greatly more tolerable than to roast in a furnace of fire.

Besides this, the later Persians believe that the world will be renovated; that the metal in the hills will melt and run like a river, and that all mankind, living and dead, will pass into that metal for three days. To the righteous, it will seem as if he were walking in warm milk, but the wicked will suffer as though in seething metal. By this process all evil thoughts and sins will be purged from the souls, and they will become purified. Even the stench and pollution of hell are wiped out. There is no longer any sin; for the sinners have become righteous, deathless, and free from stain.

The Persian and the Jewish Bibles run close parallels here, for Peter says our earth shall melt with fervent heat; that the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the earth and all its works shall be burned up.[15]

However this may be, the Persian dogma is much less fiendish than that taught by St. John; for he says that whoever is not found written in the book of life shall be cast in to the *lake of fire*; and he adds: "he that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and if any man worships the beast (the Devil) he shall be tormented with *fire and brimstone* in

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[15] 2d Peter, ch. 3, v. 10. I write this down, not that I believe that Peter and the authors of the Bundahis and the Dadistin knew anything more about the renovation of the world, or the melting of the metals, or that the earth shall melt with fervent heat, than anybody of the present day. Who told Peter and the Bundahis people about those things?

the presence of the angels and the Lamb; and the smoke of his torment ascendeth forever and ever.[16]

The molten metal burned away the stain of sin from the wicked Persian; but the Hebrew lake of fire failed, and fails, to purge and cleanse the sinful Israelite.

The Persian gospel being much older than Matthew and Revelation we may inquire: Did the writers of the Hebrew text have before them the Avesta; and did they consider the Persian hell not sufficiently terrible; that, therefore, they must add to its rigors? Or, if we mistake here, did the Bundahis and Dadistan writers have the New Testament before them, and did they conclude that a burning lake of fire and brimstone, and a furnace of fire, forever and ever, were so fearfully horrid that they ought to be mitigated, softened, and assuaged? Did those Persian writers ask themselves: "If the Lord of heaven, is filled with tender mercy, will he punish, so fearfully, the sins and follies of man? Did they reason with themselves that if God punishes the wicked in so terrible a manner, he puts himself on a level with the demons? For how could the fiends of hell do any worse than to burn people in a furnace of fire, for all eternity? If it be true that "God's mercy is everlasting, then, why is it that he hath no mercy on the hundreds of millions of people who, according to the New Testament, are at this moment being railroaded into hell, where they are burning in a lake of fire and brimstone, or roasting in a blazing furnace? The truth of this matter is that the orthodox hell is so fearful and unreasonable that a generation

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[16] Rev., ch. 14, and Rev., ch. 22.

hence only a few silly people will believe in it. The sensible ones, like Zoroaster, will insist that future punishment, if there be any, is mental and not bodily. And even this will be mitigated and softened to such a degree that it will be seen that God's mercy does endure forever;[17] and that he will be merciful to the unrighteous, and their sins and their iniquities "He will remember no more."[18]

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[17] One hundredth Psalm.
[18] 2d Hebrews, 8, 12.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ALLEGORY OF THE KINE. THE DOCTRINE OF DUALISM.

Every tribe and every people in the infancy of the race seems to have been freebooters, murderers and plunderers. It is a sad commentary, made still more gloomy because it is true.

The stealing of herds and flocks, rapine and cruelty, were not uncommon, down to a much later period than Zoroaster. The Aryans, in the Prophet's day, we have seen, were tillers of the soil; but they possessed numerous herds of cattle; and these were strong allurements to the Turanian robbers and plunderers. Marauding chiefs, with their armed followers, often made desolating incursions against their honest neighbors. It was so in Abraham's time; they plundered Lot; drove off his cattle, and carried him away as a prisoner. The same lawlessness prevailed in Zoroaster's day; but with keen insight, he seized upon the forays and robberies, not only to illustrate his doctrines, but to draw the people nearer to his cause.

He composed an allegory: It was, in truth, an allegory and something more. It was an eloquent, prayerful protest, against cruelty, and especially against cruelty to the cow, one of the chief means of honest support of home and family. The wail of the kine becomes the voice of the people, and cries out, "O Lord! for whom

didst thou create me? The assaults of wrath, insolence and violence encompass me about. None other can I look to, but thee! Teach me the good tillage of my fields" (that is, teach me the way of salvation). The Creator, hereupon, asks Asha (Personified Righteousness), "whom he had chosen to hurl back the fury of the wicked?" [1] Who is the chosen leader in this great battle for righteousness, who can bring law, order, and peace? Asha replies, "that a leader who is himself without hate, and who is able to smite back the fury of the evil-doers cannot be obtained." And he adds, "that evil permeates in some degree, all beings, but it is not permitted to be known, even to the angels, why this is so." His reply is tantamount to questioning why the Almighty, if all powerful in heaven and on earth, does not at once and forever abolish evil?

On these matters the Prophet, somewhat yet in doubt, but with hands outstretched in entreaty, prays Ahura, that the righteous may not meet destruction with the wicked. That is, that the robbers may first seize the cattle and effects of the unbelievers; and that the righteous may have a blessing in being saved from pillage. Religion, it is claimed, saves in the next world; but the man who can save those Iranian flocks and herds will thus assist the honest tillers of the soil. Such a man is certain of leadership. Zoroaster, now, adroitly names

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[1] Asha is one of the Amshaspands of Archangels to do and carry God's commands to the Iranians. God speaks to Zoroaster on request. But he talks to Moses (?) without asking.

himself as a heaven-appointed leader, to protect the kine; that is, the people.[2]

There must have been objection to the Prophet by some; for directly, Ahura says: "This man is found for me here who, alone, has hearkened to my words. He will announce my doctrines." [3]

§ 2. Zoroaster, lamenting his feebleness, prays to Ahura for wisdom and strength for his task, that he may acceptably carry forward the purposes of heaven. But he wages no war against the old Aryan Gods; he simply passes them by without mention. His purpose is to teach his people to believe in Mazda, alone. Yet he begs the Bountiful Immortals [4] to help on his cause, in both worlds, the corporeal and spiritual, that the faithful may finally reach the Holy Mount, and pass Kinvad Bridge, to their happy reward.[5]

We see frequent and repeated mention in the Gathas of the good mind, and the benevolent mind of God. In fact, Yasna 23 is devoted by the Prophet to supplications for grace; and that he may have wisdom to teach his

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[2] The record says (Yasna 29, §§ 5 and 6) the Lord appointed him; but I take it that the Lord will never do for man what he can do for himself.

[3] Whether Ahura really did say this I do not know. He probably said it in the same way and manner that "The Lord said unto Moses."

[4] Bountiful Immortals—the seven Amshaspands or Archangels; Vohumano, asha-Vahista, etc., etc.

[5] This mention of the Holy Mount leads me to suspect that these words in Yasna, 28; 5, are an interpolation; for we shall see that Zoroaster's punishment was mental, not physical.

people, not what is best for time alone, but that which will help them when the final rewards are given. He sees evil in the world; the righteous in distress, often wanting bread; the wicked flourishing and ruling with a high hand. Well might he exclaim "Defend me from those who rise up against me. For lo! they lie in wait for my soul." [6] But he reasoned beyond this. His mind is both observing and philosophical; and seeing the just, without apparent reason or cause, often in the toils of the wicked, he asks: "Why is this?" If Ahura is a being of infinite and Almighty power, why does he not strike down evil, and end its reign? It is probable that gifted minds before his day had asked the same question. However that may be, the Gathas, with his name, make the earliest known record of it.

The question itself reaches back to Infinity; to the very beginning of things.

§ 3. Zoroaster saw this, and, impatient to know, asks Ahura to teach him from his own spirit, that he may explain to his waiting people, by what laws the moral universe is governed.[7] Philosophers and thinkers, of all ages and all nations, have since followed him in the vain attempt to solve satisfactorily this mysterious problem. Just how much time he gave to meditation upon this matter, and whether he debated it with his friends, or whether it had been mooted before his day, we shall never know. But the conclusion he reached has since been accepted and followed by nearly all religions. Sometimes the copy is

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[6] Ps. LIX.
[7] Yasna 28, 12.

not exact, but the family resemblance is there in all of them.

He announced that there were, and are, a pair of independent primeval spirits: Ahura-Mazda, the good, and Aharman, the bad. And he exclaims: "Hear me with your ears; it is a decision as to religions; man for man, each individually for himself. Between these two, let the wisely-acting choose aright. Awake ye to the great emergency. I pray that ye do not choose the evil."[8] He now explains that when two spirits (not bodies) came together "to make life and its absence,"[9] and to determine the finality of things, the wicked were assigned or given the worst life; the holy, the *best mental condition.* It is noteworthy that the wicked are not assigned to hell, but to 'the worst life." Hell is not mentioned; furnaces of fire, and lakes of fire, are later arrivals. No retribution or punishment for the wicked is here set forth, save only the worst life. But when those spirits had finished, each his part in creation, each chose his favorite realm. Aharman, the evil-minded, chose the worst life; Ahura, the more bounteous spirit, preferred righteousness.

Empedocles, a Greek philosopher, centuries later, followed Zoroaster in this, although he named those forces or spirits differently. He held that there are four primary divinities, or ultimate things: earth, air, fire and water. That from these four divinities, or elements, all organic and inorganic structures are produced. These

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[8] Yasna 30, §§ 2 and 3.

[9] This is a peculiar phrase: "to make life *and its absence*; it does not say death. Through envy of the devil, death came. Wis. Solomon, ch. 2, v. 24.

four elements, he says, are eternally brought together, and eternally separated, by two divine beings or powers. Instead of naming them Ormazd and Aharman, he calls them love and hatred, or good and bad. Love is the attractive force; hatred is repellent; and these two forces pervade the whole universe.

The different proportions, in which these four elements are combined, determines the character of man and animals. The rocks in the mountains and the verdure of the valleys are fixed by the same unvarying, eternal rule. Who makes up this combination? That is the question. If fixed by those powers, Love and Hatred, when and where is the combination decided upon? Who rules, and who overrules, in this matter? There is some love and some hate in all men; but in some men the elements of love greatly predominate; in others, hate seems to hold full sway.

In Zoroaster, in Buddha, and in Jesus, love ruled them and controlled them. It made their lives a fragrance. In Arjasp, in Herod, in Nero, hate held them in her awful grip to the last. Who mixed the ingredients that produced these widely differing characters? Did the God of Love preside, or rule, when the first three were being formed; and did the God of Hate control, in the other cases? Or are these divinities both present in all cases, and mix their ingredients as best they can?

§ 4. The later writings of the Parsis have fixed up another theory about this matter. They say that in the beginning Mazda and Ahriman were both created by Zerana Akerana, an all-wise, eternal, omniscient, absolute being. That when created, Mazda and Ahriman were both wise, sinless, and divine. That Mazda, by remaining

true to Zerana Akerana, became the God of the just; but Aharman, having proved false and treacherous, found himself in endless darkness.[10] Instantly the great struggle between these two master spirits began. The world became one vast contending field of strife. The battle still rages; and the prize fought for is the soul of man. The combat will not slacken until Mazda or Ahriman is absolute victor. Milton's battle, in Paradise Lost, where the angels and demons plucked the seated hills, with all their loads, rocks, waters and woods, and hurled them at each other, is but a sharply drawn picture of this world-struggle between good and evil for the mastery.[2]

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[2] Fargard, 19, Vend., § 46, the Fravashi of Mazda is worshipped. This would seem to sustain, slightly, the theory of the text. See, also, Yast. 13, § 80, which holds the same.

CHAPTER XII.

DUALISM FURTHER CONSIDERED.

§ 1. If there really do exist two beings, or spirits, in the world, called Ormazd and Ahriman (God and the Devil), they are either created or uncreated beings. Now, if they are uncreated spirits (that is, if they have existed from all eternity), what right has the good spirit to slay or kill the bad one, any more than a good man has to slay or kill a bad man? And the same rule applies if they are created beings or spirits. Again, if they are, or were, created by Zerana-Akerana, or some other superior being, he must have created them for a purpose. Did he create Ahriman on purpose to make a fuss, and, for a time, to turn things upside down in the world, to be finally thrust into a pit, or fiery lake? Or did He create him *not* knowing that he would go astray? If so, He was not all-wise. Or if He knew he would go astray, then He created him for a bad purpose. Was it known to the "Great I Am," in the beginning, that Ahriman would seduce many from their allegiance to Ormazd? Who can answer? [1]

Perhaps he came from an infinitesimal nucleated cell, and evolution carried him forward to his present "bad eminence." Perhaps, like Topsy, he "just growed." But, that want and misery, and wickedness and sin are here, cloven-footed, none will deny. Theologians, for hundreds

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[1] See § 3, chap. 15.

of years, have strenuously tugged with this question; but they have not gone a single step beyond the Persian prophet. He tells us in a sentence, that *"two spirits* came together to make life and life's absence."[2] Farvardin Yast says that *"two spirits,* the good one and the evil one, created the world,"[3] and that Ahriman "broke into the creation of the good." Even Genesis shadows forth two or more personages at creation; for God said, "Let *us* make man in *our* image; after *our* likeness." (Genesis 1, XXVI.) Moreover, after Adam had eaten of the forbidden fruit, God said, "Behold the man is become as one of *us;* to know good and evil." (Genesis 3, 22.) Do those words indicate a plurality of Gods, at the Creation; or was God soliloquizing? Was the Persian devil there, gifted with the power of speech, talking to Eve, in the form of a serpent; but not yet crawling on his belly, for he had not yet been cursed by the Lord?[4] In the Persian mythology he is the creator of evil; in our mythology, he is the polluter, or destroyer of the good.

"My garments," said Aharman, "are dark, evil thoughts, evil words, and evil deeds, are my food, and *I love those whose* thoughts, words and deeds are evil."[5] How, then, let us ask, if the Evil One is gifted with, or possesses the faculty of *love,* can *he punish* those he wins or loves? Will any being, good or bad, injure or

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[2] Yas. 30, § 4, Vol. 31, S. B. E.

[3] Yas. 13, § 76, Vol. 23, S. B. E., p. 198.

[4] The serpent while talking with Eve must have *stood on his tail* for he did not have to "go on his belly" until after the Lord cursed him. (Genesis 3, 14.)

[5] Dink B. 9, ch. 30, § 6.

punish those he *loves?* The logic of the churches is, that God punishes the wicked, because "He is angry with them every day." [6] But, if he sends them to Hell, will not Satan make it easy on them, because *he* loves them? [7]

In reply to these words of Ahriman, Ozmazd says, "The sky is my garment; good thoughts, words, and deeds, are my food; I love those whose thoughts, words and deeds make for righteousness."

Whether true or false, this is dualism; plain and simple; and this shifting, or carrying back Ormazd and Aharman, to *their* Creator, does not dispose of it. If they possess full rein, without hindrance, what matters it to man, whether Zerana-Akerana exists or not? However, the Great Iranian does not stop to argue about zerana-Akerama. He finds the demons of wrath, contending with Ormazd, for the love and allegiance of man; and Ormazd leads in the battle for the good.

§ 2. This matter of dualism, however, cannot be disposed of by a simple waiver of the hand. If you say that evil (Aharman) is only a principle, and not a personality, then it may be replied, that this principle possesses most extraordinary vitality. If Aharman is simply a principle, that principle is so active, combative and real that it exhibits all the traits, characteristics and qualities, though of an opposite character, to those possessed by Ormazd. If it be said that Ahura is an actual, living, spiritual existence, how can it be claimed that he is waging a

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[6] Psalms 7, 11. But he does not stay angry only a moment. Psalms 30, 5.

[7] If Satan should do this, would not the Lord be frustrated, or outflanked?

ceaseless conflict against Ahriman, a non-existent or nothing? Is he waging battle against empty space?

Was it a principle only that met Ormazd to "make life and its absence?" Was it a principle that approached those Iranians, and asked them to choose *him?* [8]

Battle presupposes a conflict between opposing and contending forces. Living, existent spirits do not wage war, as we believe, against non-existent things. A syllogism would run thus: He who wages a conflict must have an opponent to contend against. Ormazd is waging battle. Therefore he has an opponent, which he is contending against.

The Iranian Bible makes frequent and repeated mention of this evil spirit. Zoroaster names him as a demon God; as the Worst Mind; as the Demon of Wrath; as the Demon of Falsehood; as the Harmful Lie; as the Lie Demon, and as the Evil Spirit.

The Jewish Bible is full, from Genesis to Revelations, about the serpent, and satan, and the Devil; the Tempter, Beelzebub, the Dragon, etc. Those devils of Iran and of Israel seem to be expert linguists. They understand the languages of the peoples. For the Jew Devil talks Aaramaic to Jesus; [9] and Satan, when he wants to afflict Job, speaks Hebrew to the Lord.[10]

Was it simply a principle or an actuality that took Jesus "up into the Holy City?" Was it a principle that offered to bribe him, when the Devil took him up "into an

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[8] Yasma 30, § 6.
[9] Matthew, ch. 4.
[10] Job, ch. I.

exceedingly high mountain?"[11] How is this? At one of Zoroaster's gatherings, while the people were debating whether they would accept his religion, or hold to their old Gods, the Worst Mind came, that "he might be chosen"; and *he* won; for, "thereupon, they rushed together unto the Demon of Fury."[12] But those Iranians, while not approved for rushing over to the Demon of Fury, were hardly as wicked as the Jews, who "sacrificed unto Devils and not to God."[13] They went beyond that; they sacrificed 'their sons and their daughters unto Devils."[14] Even the Lord himself (if the record be not false) made use of a *lying* spirit to get Ahab slain.[15] The Lord found Satan standing by Zachariah and an angel, and the Lord rebuked Satan. We might ask how the millions of other worlds all around our own were progressing while the Lord was there talking to Satan? A similar observation might be made when the Lord gave Zoroaster an audience.

§ 3. This idea of a *personal devil* has been long in the world. It has traveled far. It has crossed mountains and seas. It has invaded nation after nation, until every land in the whole earth has its devil. The New Testament caught the infection from the Persians and the Old Testament, and pictures this monster with cloven hoofs, with horns, and with hideous features. Children see pictures of his *Satanic Majesty* to this day. Holy writ tells us that

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[11] Matthew 4.
[12] Yasma 30, § 6.
[13] Deuteronomy 32, 17.
[14] Psalms 106, v. 37.
[15] 1st Kings 22, v. 22.

when this devil is caught, and locked in the bottomless pit, he can *only* be kept there one thousand years, and then he must be turned loose.[16] How are the nations to rid themselves of this engorged fiend, when pulpit and press maintain that "the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour"?[17] Suppose Satan should die, would the churches wither? Suppose this hateful myth, or being, should beat a retreat, with all his battalions, and withdrew from the earth, and make a tour of some of the other of the millions of worlds around us, would Christianity collapse? No, it would not collapse. It would sing a song of victory. What else would follow? Our literature would have to be reformed. Our ideas of business would have to be reformed. Many of our laws would be useless. In fact, we should scarcely need any laws. Justice and mercy, sympathy and love, would so prevail "that the world would be restored." [18] Eden would be regained, the Millennial Year would be at our very doors. Is this a wild dream?

Now, who is to blame that this Elysium of Bliss is kept from us? Who must be charged with getting a personal devil into our Bibles, into our thoughts, into our literature, into our very lives? The answer is not far to be sought. For if there be not, truly, a personal devil, active in the affairs of the world, if all our ideas about this evil one are merely creatures of the imagination, then our old acquaintance, Zoroaster, must be charged with all the mischief. But, if there truly exists an active wicked spirit in

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[16] Rev., ch. 20, v. 3.
[17] 1st Peter, ch. 5, v. 8.
[18] Yast 19, § 90, S. B. E., Vol. 23.

the world, polluting the lives of men, then this great Iranian teacher and preacher is entitled to the patent of discovery. He taught it to the Persians, and he taught it persistently and effectively. He hammered it into their very lives. He told them that there were two master spirits, or Gods, in the world, Ahura-Mazda, and Aharman.[19] That Mazda was the God of righteousness, that his thoughts were good; that he ought to be worshipped for his goodness; that he was beneficent, and that he loved man. That Ahura was the good mind that spoke within the soul; that he would give weal and immortality to all such as followed his commands; that his home was in the endless light, and that all his followers would find that blissful seat. In truth he promised a never-ending life of heavenly bliss to the just. All of Aharman's thoughts, words and deeds, he said, were evil; his worshippers were seeds from the evil Mind; that sin binds a heavy penance upon them; that there is a long wounding for the wicked, and the blow of destruction would surely fall upon them.[20] Their home, he said, would be in silent darkness. In short, he pictured a hell for them; but there was no *fire* or brimstone in his hell. It was a place of darkness, a gloomy abode in the under world.

§ 4. These two spirits or Gods were creative each in his own realm. Anaxagoras and Plato, many centuries later, followed Zoroaster in this, except that they said there were in nature two principles—one active and one passive. How was Zoroaster led into this line of reason-

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[19] This compound word, Ahura-Mazda, was afterwards abridged to Ormazd. I write it either way.

[20] Yasma 30 and 31, Vol. 31, S. B. E.

ing? Unquestionably it was because he saw so much injustice, sin, suffering and evil all about him, and he could account for these things only as the work of an evil deity. He had not read Isaiah, chapter 45, where God says: "I *create* evil."[21] He reasoned that Ahura was merciful, sympathetic and loving, and that he would, if he had the power, abolish this sorrow and suffering at one swoop and forever. This line of reasoning, he supposed, relieved Ahura, a just God, from all responsibility in the matter.

Whether this doctrine be true or false, Iran believed in it, adopted it, fought it, and spread it from the Oxus to Media, where it was likewise approved and became the national belief. From Media it traveled west to Babylon. Here this duality-doctrine about the year 597 B. C. met Nebuchadnezzar, a conquering King returning from the overthrow of Jerusalem. The fallen King, and Ezekiel, and Ezra, and Jedediah, and Daniel, and thousands of the principal citizens of the captive city were prisoners in the King's train. They were kept in bondage for a long generation—nearly seventy years. Their priests and scribes meanwhile studied Zoroaster's doctrine of a good and evil God. They embraced it. Perhaps they could account for their captivity in no other way than that an evil God had delivered them into the hands of their enemies.

When Cyrus[22] finally sent them back to their native land they carried Zoroaster's theology with them. Angels and devils at once appear in the Hebrew Bible.

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[21] "I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil. I, the Lord, do all these things." Isaiah, ch. 45; 7.

[22] If Cyrus was the anointed of the Lord, the Lord

Daniel, on the banks of Ulai,[23] has a vision of the angel Gabriel, similar to Zoroaster's on the banks of the Daitu, where he meets Vohu-mano, except that Daniel was frightened at the apparition, and fell down flat on his face, but Zoroaster did not flinch, although Vohu-mano seemed to be forty-nine feet tall. Daniel, also, seems to have been impressed with Zoroaster's doctrine of the resurrection, for in chapter 12 he makes explicit mention of it. In the second verse of that chapter we read, "that many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." At that time Michael, Jewish angel, will stand up, and there will be a time of trouble, but every one shall be "delivered who is found written in the Book."

§ 5. Ezekiel, another of the exiles, while yet in Babylon, has a vision of a valley full of dry bones. They are the bones of exiles who have perished there. He hears a noise, and a shaking of the bones, and they come together, bone to bone, and flesh comes upon them, and skin covers them, and breath comes to them, and they live and stand upon their feet. And the Lord said to Ezekiel: "Prophesy and say: 'the Lord will open your graves and bring you into the land of Israel, and will put his spirit into you, and will place you in your own land.' "[24]

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uses some miserable wretches to accomplish his ends. For Cyrus was cruel and barbarous. He murdered his prisoners; some of them by burning.

[23] See Vol. 47, S. B. E., ch. 3, of Book 7, p. 48; Daniel, ch. 8, v. 16.

[24] Ezekiel, ch. 37, v. 1 to 14. This was soothing to those poor exiles, but none of them ever came up out of their graves.

We observe that Ezekiel is specific about the manner of the resurrection. He goes into details about it, whereas Zoroaster tells us that the souls of the righteous shall have safe passage across Kinvad Bridge.[25]

The great Iranian does not teach the resurrection of the body. He is entirely silent about it. What is said in section three, chapter nine, is a later doctrine from the Vendidad.[26] Zoroaster says: "I am delivering up my mind and soul to reach the heavenly Mount,[27] whither all the *redeemed* must pass." He sees that if the soul passes the Bridge in safety, it has reached the home of the Good Mind. It is in heaven. It would, therefore, need no resurrection. Nowhere in Zoroaster's teachings does he announce that the soul goes into the grave. Job said: "When I go to the land of darkness, and the shadow of death, I shall not return."[28] Of course no sensible person believes that after his body goes into the grave it will ever come forth again. Why should it come forth? It goes down into the grave, blasted by age, or eaten by disease, or torn in battle, or wrecked by some of the thousand calamities that befall the race. If the body be resurrected it must be the *same* that went into the grave. Was not the vision of Ezekiel simply a happy consolation, offered by the poet to those suffering exiles, that although their bodies might be buried in Babylon yet the God of their

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[25] See ch. 10, § 1, ante as to Kinvad Bridge.

[26] Westengard's fragments, in the Vend., p 247: The Bundahis followed Ezekiel as to the resurrection of the *bodies*.

[27] Mount Alborz, at the heavenly end of the Bridge. See ch. 28, § 5, Vol. 31, S. B. E.

[28] Job X, 21.

Fathers would bring them up out of their graves and take them back to "their own, their native land"?

The Persian did not teach justification by faith, but that every man was his own Saviour. That good thoughts, good words and good deeds would land every soul safely in the home of the Good Mind.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE IRANIAN BELIEF: IT LEADS TO A DIVISION OF SENTIMENT, THREATENING WAR. ZOROASTER'S PRAYERS.

§ 1. In the Persian belief there was no remission of sins. Every man made his own atonement for his own offenses. His sins were, as we have seen, charged up against him, but it was in his power to overbalance them by good thoughts, words and deeds. He knew nothing about salvation by faith. God would give him blessings in His Holy Realm "in reward for good deeds."[1] No Saviour up to Zoroaster's time had ever died for the Persians. Thus each one by himself, and for himself, without any intercessor, fixed his own destiny. He worked out "his own salvation" himself, and thus made expiation for his own misdeeds.

Zoroaster did not teach his people, as did Moses the Jews,[2] to catch two goats and cast lots upon them, one for the Lord and one for the Scape-Goat, and upon the goat upon which the Lord's lot fell, sacrifice him for their sins. The other goat, with the sins of all the people on its poor head, was thrust forth into the wilderness. It is possible, nay, it is highly probable, that if those Iranians had heard of Aaron and his goats they would have occasionally roasted one and thus have made the

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[1] Yas. 43, § 16, Vol. 31, S B. E.
[2] Leviticus, ch. 16, v. 5 to 10.

passage across Kinvad Bridge not only easy but an absolute certainty.

A vastly different doctrine was, however, taught them. They were told that "the smallest sin brings its penalty." [3] that this doctrine, unheard of before, *would deliver the people from* the Lie-Demon.

It was an indubitable truth, but it was a question which concerned the soul. "O, ye listening men," exclaimed the Prophet. "Let not a man of you lend a hearing to the evil-doers. And ye vile, long life shall be your lot in darkness." [4] But Ahura will give both weal and immortality to the Righteous order. "To the wise," he added, "these things are clear."

The promulgation of these doctrines provoked so great a strife, and it raged so fiercely, that Zoroaster found himself like Paul, not only wrestling against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers. The chief men in high places became implacable foes.

He who would not reclaim his life, he who would despoil the honest tiller of his herds and flocks, he who would give ear to the Lie-Demon, against such he urged his followers "to fly to arms and hew them all with the halberd." It was not only a spiritual warfare but an actual hand-to-hand conflict that confronted the seer and his followers. His enemies were offering devotions to a false religion, and if they secured power would deliver home, village and province to ruin and death. All such

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[3] Yasna 31, § 1 and § 13.

[4] Yasna 31, §§ 20, 21 and 22. Darkness is not as terrible as to burn.

were seeds of the Evil Mind, and their deceits are found, he said, in all the seven zones of the earth.

§ 2. With what words the opponents of Zoroaster answered this severe arraignment we are not told. We can, however, infer that these charges were met by countercharges which were fast leading up to blood. One Yima Vivanghusha is pointed out as an evil teacher, a wretched being, full of crime, who was perverting the minds of the people. This man, Zoroaster declares, is filled with deceit and is scheming to establish the Kavis (idolaters) in power. Thus he would destroy the religion of the faithful.

Although a warrior of note, "wielding a glittering blade of iron,"[5] he yet was of that pestiferous class found in all ages who will stoop to open bribery to gain advantages where force cannot prevail. But this did not abate the great reformer's zeal, for he threatens to yet drive hence the Kavis or Karpans and their followers.

Long after this, in a distant land, a similar scene was enacted between Elijah, the prophet, and Ahab, the wicked King of Israel. In both cases the prophets and their adherents prevail. Ahab is slain, and the Karpans, after a long struggle, as we shall see, were also overcome. But not until the idolaters, in both Iran and in Israel, were put down did the troubles of the faithful cease. This threat to drive the Karpans hence exhibits a plain phase of Zoroaster's character. He is not only religious, but he is stubbornly religious. He is willing to fight for his religion rather than yield it. Hence, to visit vengeance

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[5] Yas. 32, § 7.

upon evil-doers was not thought to be inconsistent with his duty or his religion.

He saw that the Karpans were even then planning open hostilities against him and his followers, and, not possessing the gentle, non-combative spirit of the Man of Galilee, he would oppose them with force. Less cruel than Moses and Joshua, for they were murderers and plunderers;[6] his religion allowed him the easy latitude of all subsequent religions. He abjured evil, but the Lord had "not given him the spirit of fear."[7] In the same breath in which he besought Ahura for blessings on the Kine (the people) he denounced his enemies with unsparing tongue. While this is true, it must be said of him that he was the very buttress of the whole religious arch, and with his absence or death his great reform would have dwindled, withered and fallen. He knew this, and he knew also that his arch-enemy, Yima Vivanghusha, was able at any moment to hurl his mace at him[8] and forever end his career. Paul suffered in prison for years because of the religion he taught; Zoroaster, centuries before Paul's day, became not only a "gazing-stock" for the wicked,[9] but finally gave his life in the cause of his people. Both of these

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[6] Moses caused all the Midianites to be murdered, except the little girls, who were kept for a shameful purpose. Ch. 31, Numbers. Moses also murdered the Egyptian; Exodus, ch. 2, v. 11 and 12. Joshua plundered Jericho and murdered all the people, both young and old, except a harlot. Joshua, ch. 6, and he did the same with the city of Ai, Joshua, ch. 8.

[7] 2d Timothy, ch. 1, v. 7.

[8] Yas. 32, § 10.

[9] Hebrews, ch. 10, v. 33.

men were great moral heroes who sought the betterment of the race.

§ 3. A religious war in Iran was impending, and like all religious wars since the dawn of history, it was to be cruel and desolating. It was preceded by persecutions and lawlessness, and perhaps murders, of which we know but little. If Zoroaster had named one of his devils the Demon of *Intolerance*; that fiend would have been aptly designated, for Intolerance, if it be not a demon; this may be alleged against it. It has reddened many a field; its victims fill millions of graves. In fact, in some quarters of the globe, even at the present day, it rears its monster head. It was numberless ages before any herald appeared proclaiming "Peace on earth, and good will to man." And if the angels really did bring those sweet words from the skies, mankind has not very diligently pondered them.

Zoroaster was not heralded by any such heaven-born sentiment. He lived back nearer to the birth of the race, and, therefore, in a more cruel period. The spread of his gospel, like all new faiths or beliefs, wherever it reached, called forth discussion, opposition and controversy. It went beyond this and culminated in open war. The gospel of Galilee, a thousand years and more after its great founder perished, brought upon the land of its birth invasions and wars as cruel as any that ever devastated the earth. No mortal struggle ever surpassed in fierceness and hate, the religious wars of the Crusaders. In truth, a religious war, seems filled to the brim with malice and all the dregs of evil. It was the same in this war waged against the religion taught by the great Persian. And in

order to be successful in the impending strife each party invoked the higher Powers, for help.[10]

§ 4. Zoroaster's Prayer: "This I ask of Thee, O, Ahura! that thou wilt send mighty destruction among our enemies. Wilt Thou deliver the Lie-Demon and his followers into the hands of the Righteous Order? O, Lord! when the two hosts shall meet, to which of the two wilt Thou give the day? Lord, we smite for the protection of Thy doctrines. Draw near with Thy good mind and support those who strive for weal and immortality. Tell us, O Lord! how we may proceed to that consummation. And to our deluded foes, the daeva-worshippers, have they ever reigned worthily? The Karpans (heretics) are given to rapine and slaughter. They are of the Lie-Demon, and have never brought waters to the fields of the Righteous Order. They have never given tribal wealth or blessings to the Kine. They are recreant to Thy Law. O, Lord! knowing well their doom at last, let Thy conquering hosts, with gifts of Grace, triumph in the coming strife. Who but Thee hath sustained the earth from *beneath*,[11] and the clouds above, that they do not fall? Who but Thee holds

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[10] It was the same in our civil war, when I was in the army forty-three years ago. Our chaplains were wont to pray fervently for the defeat and destruction of our enemies. And the confederate divines (as I have since heard and read) put up equally fervent petitions to the Almighty for our defeat. Suppose they could have mustered a few more battalions, would the Lord have heard them? We know that "time and chance happeneth to all." Eccle. 9, 11.

[11] He had not yet learned that the earth is round, and that there is no *"beneath"* to it.

the sun and the stars in their course? Who but Thee, O, Great Creator! yokes the storm-clouds to the winds? O, Ahura, Lord! use us, Thy people, as instruments to keep those deceitful and those harsh oppressors from reaching their aims. Let, O, Lord, that holy faith and piety, which are of all things best, go hand in hand. And in the final striving, for the sake of Thy Righteous Order, may Thy Grace prevail."[12]

If we were to follow the later Avesta we would see Vistaspa offering sacrifices of one hundred horses, one thousand oxen, and ten thousand lambs, with libations that he might overcome, in battle, Tatherevant, of the bad law; that he might put to flight AstaAurvant, of the brazen helmet; and that he might slay the Hyonian murderer, Arjasp; that he might slay the Hyonians by the hundreds, by the thousands, and by the myriads.[13] Husravh, he who united the Aryan clans into a kingdom, and others of the faith offered similar sacrifices, and begged the boon that he might kill the Iranian murderers.[14] Perhaps they had heard of Exodus, where none must appear before the Lord empty handed.

§ 5. But this praying and sacrificing was not[15] all done by the Aryans, for the same record sets forth that

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[12] I have here given the substance of the Prophet's petition, which runs through Yasma 44, Vol. 31, S. B. E.

[13] Gos Yast, § 29 and § 30; also Aban Yast, § 108 and § 109, Vol. 23, S. B. E. But these Yasts are of a later period than Zoroaster. They, however, have crept into his history.

[14] Exodus, ch. 23, v. 15. None must appear before the Lord empty handed.

[15] This later Avesta was written after the days of Zoro-

the Turanians, Arjasp and his brother, Vandariman, offered up sacrifices of one hundred horses, a thousand oxen, and ten thousand lambs to Arda Sura Ananita (the goddess of waters) and besought the boon *that* they might conquer Vistaspa and his army, and that they might smite the Aryan people by hundreds, by the thousands, and by the myriads.[16]

It is possible that these sacrifices were offered, but Zoroaster does not mention them, nor does it appear in the Gathas that he offered any. The Gathas are mostly made up of exhortations and prayers, including some sharp denunciations of the wicked.[17]

The Prophet, instead of killing oxen and lambs to gain the favor of the Almighty, falls on his knees: "Tell me, O Lord! the end, for Thou dost know. Tell me, O Thou Good Mind! and thus increase my strength and courage before the encounter comes. Tell me, Lord! the future of

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aster, yet these sacrifices may have been offered, for the *whole world* was then likewise engaged. Solomon, we know (2 Chron., ch. 7), offered up 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep at the dedication of his temple, a building in no wise extraordinarily large or beautiful.

[16] These Turanians were a barbarous, warlike people, who lived near the southern extremity of the Caspian. Their place in history is somewhat indistinct. Some scholars believe their home was not far from the Jihun (Oxus). Others identify them with the Hyonians or Chionites, and locate them west of the Caspian.

[17] Balak, king of the Moabites, also sacrificed that he might conquer Israel. Did Balak learn this from Arjasp, or had Arjasp heard of Balak, and did he follow him? The sacrifices are very similar.

the struggle. I will hope and pray, though I know not the issue. But, O Lord, let not the evil gain the day, but in accordance with Thy will, let the righteous prosper and rule. They will grant us pleasing homes while we live.[18] Do Thou, O Lord, let the demon of rapine be cast down. We hold fast to our sacred refuge in Thee. Thy struggling servant, with changing lot, who toils for Thy Kingdom, how shall he beseech Thee for victory? What is the potent prayer to bring on the Holy reign? How shall I seek to spread Thy Righteous Order while I live? May Piety ever be present, and may she, through the indwelling of the Good Mind (Holy Spirit), give us blessings in reward for our struggles in Thy cause." [19]

Is not this idea uppermost in all our prayers and in all our religions? We want a quid-pro-quo, an equivalent, for all we say and do for the Lord. We do not thank Heaven for life. We came without our asking. We shall go hence without our requesting. We come; we go; we ebb; we flow; and that great mysterious Ocean, called Time, swallows us up and we are not.

Did that something, which we call soul or mind (for they are inseparable), live beyond the struggle which shortly laid the Prophet's body in the grave? That is the question. Who can answer? No one hath come back to tell us.

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[18] The reader will notice all along that the Turanians seem to be free-booters and plunderers. The righteous, as Zoroaster calls them, were law-abiding.

[19] Yasna 43, §§ 14 to 16, and Yasna 48, Vol. 31, S. B. E.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BATTLE. DEFEAT OF IRAN. THE ARMIES. BENDVA AND THE PROPHET. THE KARPANS. THEIR MISDEEDS.

It is probable that before any contest arose with the surrounding tribes or nations about the new religion there were many sharp controversies among and between the people of Iran. Blood flowed at Jerusalem and thereabouts before the Gospel reached any foreign land. Even one of Jesus' friends smote the ear from off a disbeliever.[1] There were envyings and strifes, and divisions raging among the elect.[2] No doubt Zoroaster saw the same divisions and strifes in his own ranks. The unbelievers were denounced as heretics, as enemies, and as the seed of the Evil Mind. But those very disputes, in Bactria, or wherever they occurred, served only to publish far and wide the faith and creed of the Prophet.

It did not, therefore, fall still-born; they talked about it; there was much wagging of tongues; much shaking of heads. There were believers and disbelievers. Even Jesus' brothers did not believe in him.[3] And he was obliged to remain for a season in Galilee, lest the Jews might kill him.

In the more desperate and savage times of the Persian he, without question, ran many such chances. He stood,

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[1] Matt., ch. 26, v. 51.
[2] Ist Corinthians, ch. 3, v. 3.
[3] St. John, ch. 7, v. 5.

as it were, upon the outer battlement, conspicuous, defying all the Goliaths of the Turanians. And he stood thus for more than fifty years.[4]

The storm, long gathering, was about to break. Arjasp, the Turanian leader, was marching an army to invade Iran.

It has been said that the cause of this war was the failure of Vistaspa to continue to pay Arjasp the tribute agreed upon as the result of a former war. Possibly this may have been mixed up in the controversy, yet the great moving cause of the struggle was the differing religions. In fact, this war was called "The War of the Religions." [5]

The battle resulted in a sore defeat to the Iranians, and if the improbable story of the Bundahis be true, they were only saved from destruction by a part of a mountain breaking loose and sliding down into the plain, thereby sheltering them from their victorious enemies. The Iranians call this mountain Mount Madofryad, which means "come to help". Zachariah says that the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof, and half of the mountain shall remove toward the South, and half toward the North. Did he copy, or did the Iranians? [6]

The exact location of this battle cannot be stated. It may have been far down on the borders of Afghanistan, or it may have been nearer Bactria. But it is certain that the Iranians were routed,[7] for Zoroaster, to encourage his

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[4] Ch. 23, § 8, Vol. 47, S. B. E.

[5] Bund., ch. 12, § 33; see also ch. 4, § 77, Vol. 47, S. B. E.

[6] Zachariah, ch. 14, v. 4.

[7] Bund., ch. 12, speaks of "come to help", as the place

followers, tells them that though the battle is lost all is not yet lost.[8] Mazda, he said, would yet save and protect them against their unbelieving foes.

§ 2. If the Shah-Nama, founded upon extravagant and careless tradition, has given the numbers of the contending forces correctly, then there were potent causes for Iran's defeat, for her 144,000 were met by Arjasp with 300,000.[9] But these numbers seem wild and improbable, for if this battle, with such numbers, was fought even as late as six hundred years B. C. there would be some mention of it in history outside of the Avesta and works copied from it.

On the other hand, if Zoroaster's period is back fifteen, or even ten centuries before Jesus' day, no such Turanian force could be assembled, nor could the Iranians put their alleged one hundred and forty-four thousand into the field. Arjasp was simply a border-chief, and his army did not, probably, reach one-tenth of the numbers above mentioned.

Now, an army of twenty thousand[10] men and four thousand horses for a campaign of four months would require about six thousand tons of food and forage. Those Turanians were invading an hostile country, and not a very

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where Vistaspa routed Arjasp, but the same text says there was confusion among the "Iranians" and they were saved as above stated. If the mountains had to save them, how could they be victorious?

[8] Yasna 49, §§ 3, 4 and 5.

[9] The Shah Nama mentions that Vistasp was in Bactra when he received envoys from Arjasp about the tribute.

[10] My experience in our civil war leads me to flatly controvert the wild statement of the Zartust-Nama.

fertile one at that. It is simply impossible that they could transport supplies for three hundred thousand men.

§ 3. Benda, another border chief, who had ever opposed the Prophet and his religion, about this time gained such an advantage that there was much wavering among Zoroaster's followers. The Prophet himself says: "Bandva is most powerful and would crush my strength while I seek to *win back* the disaffected." [11] In truth, he even caused Zoroaster to hesitate, and ponder, whether his course of reform was the wisest that could be adopted. Whether Bendva assisted Arjasp in gaining the victory above mentioned is not certain, but it is not improbable that the two forces acted together, for both of those leaders were seeking the same end, namely, the overthrow of Zoroaster and his doctrines.

Religion, whenever necessary to gain its ends, has never scrupled to use the torch and the sword. Moses and Joshua, in the name of the Lord, burned cities and slew the people thereof with a fiendishness and savagery never yet surpassed.[12] Even while I write these lines the armies of the world are in China making war on the people there. Religion and plunder are at the bottom of the whole thing.

In religion, a thesis or creed is announced, and woe be to the man who controverts it. Bendva, no doubt, be-

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[11] Yasma 49, § 1.

[12] Moses sent his armed men against the Midianites and destroyed them. Numbers 31. He also drove out the Amorites and took Bashan. Numbers, ch. 21; 32 and 33. See Joshua, ch. 6 and 8, where the people of Ai and Jericho perished.

longed to that class who held to the old faith. Perhaps one of his main objections to the new creed was that there were not two primeval creative spirits or beings.[13] He may have antagonized the Prophet on the ground that there was no such crossing or place as the Kinvad Bridge. He may have ridiculed the idea that there was an evil God. He may have held to the doctrine of the Sadducees that there is no resurrection of the dead. Whatever that old belief was, he was willing to fight a battle to maintain it. Evidently it was a full-fledged creed with numerous followers. But if the inquiry be made, what was that old faith? No exact, explicit answer can be given. We search in vain for a single direct statement of what it was, and can only gather an idea of it, here and there, by what the Prophet alleges against it.

§ 4. We know that good thoughts, words and deeds are the foundations of the Zoroaster structure, and we reason that Bendva, Arjasp and the Turanians must have held to the contrary.

Repeatedly the Prophet charges that the Karpans are destroyers; that they neither bring harvests to the fields, nor food to the Kine. That their teachings and deeds lead to the House of the Lie, bringing only woe and desolation.[14]

Of this we may be reasonably certain, the Karpans were not friendly to the tillers of the soil; for the Prophet cries out: "O, Great Creator! I ask of Thee two blessings for Thy followers. Grant Thy protection over our gathered wealth, and give us those spiritual blessings promotive of

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[13] See Dualism, ch XI, § 3.
[14] Yas. 51, §§ 12 to 15.

our worship of Thee. I speak for all who are guided by Thy Law. Yea, I cry aloud to Thee, for all these assembled here. And they ask: Where is the Lord? Will He show us mercy, and save us from these dreaded dangers? It is the tiller of the earth who asks this of Thee, O, Ahura".

The Prophet himself says he asks all this that he may discover how he can gain to himself the Sacred Kine; that is, the love and help of the people. Now, if the Karpans did not, or would not, cultivate the fields, but destroyed the fruitage thereof, and plundered the herds, then here is a plain dividing line between "the two striving sides"; Zoroaster being a strong tower of defense against these misdeeds. We have here the manifest reason why the miscreants sought to destroy his life.[15]

There is nowhere an explanation or denial of these serious charges against the Karpans, and the inquiry arises: Whence came the instigation for these misdeeds? Was old Aharman (the devil) right there urging them on, or is man prone to evil? I know that Isaiah, in chapter 45, says: "The Lord created evil"; and Job, in chapter 2d, hints the same way. But I question whether the Lord really did create evil. Is it not rather inherent in the very nature of things? Or is Zoroaster's dualism, or theory of a good God, and an evil one correct? The reader can make his choice.

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[15] Yas. 51, §§ 2 to 12. Yas. 31, § 3, has it, "two battling sides."

CHAPTER XV.

SECOND BATTLE. VISTASPA'S VICTORY. THE SPREAD OF THE FAITH. SECTION 3. IS THERE A DUALISM?

The defeat of Zoroaster's followers, as mentioned in the preceding chapter, did not break their courage. For Vistaspa rallied his scattered forces and gave battle again, and this time he achieved a great success. But his own household suffered sorely, twenty-two of his sons being slain. This number seems extravagant, but is in keeping with the foolish statement that Zarir, the brother of Vistaspa, repeatedly hewed down ten Khyons at one blow. Zarir himself finally falls, pierced to the heart by a spear, but not until Arjasp's army is defeated with terrible slaughter.[1]

How much time elapsed between these two battles cannot be stated. The Shah-Nama says two weeks, but if in the first engagement there was such confusion among the Iranians that they were only saved by part of a mountain sliding down into the plain, and thus sheltering them from their enemies that time is too short.[2]

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[1] The Shah-Nama says Arjasp lost 100,000 slain in the two battles. That work greatly tries my patience by its foolish exaggerations. It mentions that in both wars Vistaspa lost thirty-eight sons. If so, he must have been a very industrious man, as well as wise sovereign.

[2] I was with a great defeated army under McClellan,

The victory, however, is complete, for Arjasp is driven back to his own country, so humbled, that Zoroaster makes progress with his religion for several years before his old enemy appears again to break the peace.

By this victory Vistaspa becomes at once the arm and support of Zoroaster's cause. The later Avesta sets forth, exultingly, that he found religion standing bound, and took her from the hands of the Kyans, and established her high, ruling, holy and blessed with plenty of cattle and pasture.[3] The same authority states that he drove all his enemies before him, conquered them, and thus made wide room for the holy religion. Some of these enemies are mentioned, and among them Arjasp, as being particularly fiendish and wicked.[4]

Peace now reigned for a season, and Vistaspa, to emphasize and extol his victory, sends his son, Isfander, to surrounding tribes and nations to proclaim the tidings thereof. There is a tradition that Vistaspa also founded a fire-temple and placed Jamasp, as high priest, in charge of it. But this is surely an error, for neither the Iranians nor the Persians, their children, worshipped in temples. They had their mountain of Holy Questions; their Sinai, where Zoroaster talked with Ormazd (?); and they be-

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in 1862, when he was driven from the front of Richmond and fled to the shelter of the gunboats on James River, and I there learned that two weeks is much too short a time for a routed army to recuperate and recruit its exhausted strength.

[3] Zamyad Yast, § 86, S. B. E., Vol. 23.

[4] Arjasp is often called Argat-Aspa, but I prefer the shorter cognomen.

lieved that the tops of hills and mountains were nearer to Heaven, and they worshipped there.

§ 2. This last battle and victory gave a very great impetus to Zoroaster's creed. "From near and from afar" [5] people came seeking knowledge of the new religion. Evil beliefs, he said, are the overthrow of the wicked. And he repeats to them that when the world's *two first spirits* came together the More Bountiful thus spake to the Evil One: "I do not think what thou thinkest, for I think what is good, and thou thinkest what is evil. Neither our beliefs, nor our deeds, nor our consciences, nor our souls are in harmony."

The sage then declares that all who will not obey the righteous Mazda their life shall end in woe. But they who follow the Good Mind, striving within their souls, shall reap weal and immortality. Blessings to the righteous, but woe to the wicked, these things hath Mazda established throughout his realm. The demon Gods must be opposed, thwarted, defeated. But the bounteous Lord of Saving Power, who gives weal and immortality, must be adored, honored, obeyed. "He is our brother; yea, he is more than brother. He is father to us; Mazda, Lord. And he will bestow rewards beyond this earth." [6]

§ 3. It will be noticed that here, again, is mentioned "the world's two first spirits." Did Homer, who lived nine or ten centuries before Jesus, catch the thought from the Iranian Seer, and by changing the original slightly, paint this picture?

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[5] Yas. 45, § 1.

[6] Yasma 45; also Yas. 30, § 4. and Yas. 46, § 19. See also ch. 12, § 1.

"Two Urns by Jove's high throne have ever stood,
The source of evil, one; the other good.
From thence, the cup of mortal man he filis,
Blessings to these, to those, distributes ills.
To most, he mingles both." *Book 24. Iliad.*

It must be conceded that Zoroaster, so far as known, brought into the world this idea of two contending spirits; the one good, the other evil. The poet makes one God (Jove) the author of all our ills, sin and misery. Which of these great souls is right? Here are two systems or theories, and men have taken opposing sides since the Iranian Seer first announced his duality. Possibly some other great thinker, even before his day, had stumbled against this unanswerable enigma. We leave this matter here with this question: If there exists a duality, and behind these a unity, or creative power, which controls them; then, against Zerana-Akerana, or whatever that unity may be named, must be charged the responsibility for all the evil and sin in the world. For with such limitless power, He can make and unmake worlds and myriads of worlds. Hence how easy for Him at one stroke to smite and destroy sin with all its ugly brood.[7] Or is this theory true? Does the Great I Am rule this planet by His vicegerents? Possibly angels are delegated to act.

In the Desatir this question is answered in this wise: God is the immediate Maker of the Angels. He used the medium of no instrument in bestowing existence on them, but in regard to *all other* existences he used Media or instruments.[8]

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[7] See § 1, ch. 12.

[8] Desatir, published at Bombay, 1818, Vol. 2, p. 125.

We know that every orthodox minister, and some who are not orthodox, claims that God has called *him* to act as a helper. Is it true that the Divine Being, we call God, is simply the vicegerent of some higher and more mighty power? Thomas Dick, the devout astronomer, in his great work, says, there are nine thousand millions of visible worlds about us. Our world is only as a grain of sand on the seashore. Yet it took millions of years to build it; and if it required Zoroaster, Buddha, Jesus, and multitudes of other, to labor in the moral vineyard, why not some colossus to superintend the whole? This problem did not escape Zoroaster. Its germ is in the Avesta,[9] but the Seer did not elaborate it. Dualism served his purpose. Moreover Dualism was easier for his people to understand. But who shall say there is no Zerana Akerana?

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[9] Farvardin Yast, § 80, Vol. 23, S. B. E. Also Fargard 19, Vendidad, § 46, Vol. S. B. E.

CHAPTER XVI.

MIRACLES. THE ROOF OF A TEMPLE PARTS FOR ZOROASTER. TWO SCOFFERS SENT UP IN THE AIR. ELISHA AND THE SHE-BEARS. ZOROASTER HEALS THE BLIND. MOSES BRINGS DOWN MURRAIN AND HAIL. VISIONS OF THE PROPHETS. JOSHUA AND THE SUN. IN ZOROASTER'S VISION HE SEES HEAVEN AND HELL.

Around every great historic name myths and legends gather, and the greater the name the more the myths and legends seem to multiply about it. The marvelous, with some, is more pleasing than the real. With those the Arabian Knights and the Travels of Gulliver are enchanting. That class will here find mental pabulum to their liking.

In one of Zoroaster's crusades against unbelievers a great multitude was gathered to hear him. Royalty, gorgeously appareled, princes and peers were there. A mighty temple was packed to overflowing. The audience, on tiptoe with expectation, was waiting and watching his coming. Suddenly, to its amazement, and almost terror, there was a great snapping and cracking over their heads, as if the building were about to collapse and fall. But, instead, a rift appeared in the roof. It parted asunder, hither and thither, by some invisible agency, and the prophet, holding a great blazing ball of fire in his hand, came down through the rifted roof. The fire did not burn him, and the roof swung back into its place without mortal help and without so much as a splinter falling.

This startling exhibition of supernatural power was, to the waiting throng, a certain proof that his person was sacred, his mission divine.

At another time he chanted his revelation in the home of Vistaspa with such pleasing power that not only the people who heard him were filled with righteousness but even the cattle of the fields, and the beasts of burden danced with joy. Meanwhile the fame of the Seer had penetrated India, where his creed ran counter to the Rig-veda. There lived at that time one Cangranghacah, a learned Brahman, a great philosopher, scholar and teacher, who proposed to come to Balkh (Bactria) and overthrow Zoroaster and his creed. He set out with a large retinue of distinguished persons, scholars versed in the lore of Veda, together with disciples anxious to listen to the great debate. Ormazd gives the Prophet full premonition of all the questions Cangranghacah will ask, and the answers he shall make to them.

To each interrogatory of the Hindu the Seer reads a chapter from the Avesta in full answer and refutation. The audience is astonished, and the Brahman confounded. He is not only confounded, but he is then and there converted to the Iranian creed, and returns home with the Avesta, prepared to teach its doctrines to the dwellers on the Indus and the Ganges.

§ 2. Another legend even more marvelous is that while the Prophet was making one of his many pilgrimages through the country, teaching wherever he could get a hearing, he met two unbelieving princes, whom he besought to embrace the faith. They sneered at his entreaty, and scoffed at his religion. Thereupon he prayed to Ormazd, and directly a great wind began to roar

around them, which snatched the scoffers up into the air and held them there until the birds picked out their eyes and tore the flesh from their bones. When the bones had fallen to the earth the Seer admonished the wondering and terrified people that such was the fate of all who scoffed at the good religion of Mazda. Probably the writer of Second Kings, chapter second, had heard of the two scoffing princes and their fate when he wrote the story about the forty-two children down there near Bethel who scoffed at Elisha and said: "Go up thou Bald-Head." Elisha "turned back and *cursed them in the name of the Lord*"; and "there came forth two *she* bears, out of the wood, and tore forty and two children of them." This difference must, however, be noticed: The children, the text says, were "*little*". Like all other "little" children, they were no doubt thoughtless, and merely to say to him, "Go up thou bald-head" was no sufficient provocation for Elisha to curse them, and get the she bears to "tear them." This story, if true, makes Elisha a wretch, and if Zoroaster prayed Ormazd for the whirlwind to suspend the two princes in the air while the birds devoured them he must be placed in the same category.[1]

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[1] I have tried to find some reason for the children's conduct, and can only give this: Elijah had just "gone up", and probably the children had heard of "the chariot of fire" and the "horses of fire", and they wanted to see another pyrotechnic display. They told Elisha to "go up." They simply wanted to see the strange performance, and got killed for their curiosity. The story of the two scoffing princes is a legend. I do not set it down as a fact. But this Elisha matter is in our Bible, and it is set down as a solemn truth. But there are some improbable things

A story is told of the Iranian healing a blind man. But he did not merely say, "Receive thy sight".[2] He told his friends to squeeze the juice of a certain plant (which he named) into the man's eyes and his vision would come back to him. This they did, and behold the man was soon rejoicing in a restored sight.

Tacitus relates that the Emperor Vespasian, while in Judah healed a blind man, but he first ordered his physicians to examine whether the eye-balls were totally destroyed. Finding them dreadfully diseased, but not entirely ruined, he ordered remedies, which fortunately proved successful.[3]

§ 3. If we follow the Dinkard[4] we make the Iranian Seer not only the founder of a new religion, but in addition, we elevate him to the highest eminence in medical attainments. The Dinkard writers are, however, much like those of the Old and New Testament; they are given to great exaggerations, and delight in the marvelous.

The Prophets in both books[5] were gifted with power to

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about it. How did the writer know they were *she* bears? Who told him? They were evidently wild bears, for they came out of the wood. Let, now, the best man in the world get forty-two little children torn by bears, or any other animal, he would swing for it. Prophet, or no prophet, Elisha ought to have been punished.

[2] Jesus said to a blind man: "Receive thy sight, thy faith hath saved thee." Luke, ch. 18, v. 42.

[3] Vespasian was born nine or ten years after Jesus, and his cure was about thirty years after the occurrence mentioned in Luke, ch. 18. Royalty, and noted persons, at that period were believed to possess preternatural gifts.

[4] Dk. 7, Vol. 47, ch. 5, § 8, S. B. E.

[5] The Bible and Dinkard.

vanquish demons, and sorcerers, and witches; to cure diseases, and call down rain, or declare a drouth.[6] Moses could stretch forth his hand, and lo! the locusts would swarm upon Egypt; and the Dinkard says Zoroaster possessed the same preternatural power. Moses could bring upon Egypt murrain, and flies, and hail, and snakes;[7] and Zoroaster could banish pestilence and drive away wolves, and spiders, and noxious creatures. He could shake the rain from reluctant clouds to moisten the earth. Similar parallels between Zoroaster and many others of the Jewish prophets might also be made. Isaiah had a vision in which he saw his people, a sinful nation, bringing vain oblations, Jerusalem ruined, and Judah fallen, hell enlarged, and the multitude gone astray.

Jeremiah beheld in a vision his people swallowed up in trouble, "and his lamentations" are full of tears. Ezekiel also wailed for his people, and Solomon found the "grasshopper to be a burden." [8] Zoroaster likewise had a vision in which he saw the fearful ebb-tide of his religion. Not only that, but (after the manner of Dives and Lazarus) he caught a glimpse of the other world. There he saw a celebrity, whose life had been infamous, his soul was jaundiced and in hell; in Mazda's blessed realm a beggar's soul was thriving in Paradise. He beheld evil overshadowing his land; myriads of demons, with disheveled hair, rushing into his country to burn and destroy. Regard for

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[6] Elijah, the Tishbite, gave Ahab a terrible drouth. He controlled the rain clouds for *three* years. 1st Kings, ch. 1, v. 17.

[7] Exodus, ch. 9 and 10.

[8] Eccle. 12, 7.

the soul had died out; the sun was spotted, and the earth barren. Vegetation, trees and shrubs were shriveled. Well might he exclaim, "O, Iran! return unto Mazda, thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity."[9] But "the wolf period," with covetousness, want, hatred, wrath, lust, envy, and wickedness,[10] passes away, and the glory of the religion of Mazda comes again with the Millennium of Hushedar. For seven days and nights this panoramic view, in which Zoroaster saw all the regions of the earth, floated past the astonished vision of the Seer. "I have seen all this, in a pleasant dream," he said, and "I am not surfeited."[11] We are told in Genesis, chapter 28, that Jacob also had a dream, and he saw a ladder reaching up to heaven, and the angels of God were climbing up and down it, and the Lord himself *was standing* above it. Genesis 28; 12.

§ 4. It should be mentioned, in addition to the above, that in chapter seven, of the Gospel of the Infancy of Jesus, it is there stated that Zoroaster had a vision of the wise men, coming from the East to Jerusalem, with offerings of gold, etc., to the Saviour, and that he prophesied the coming of Jesus.[12]

Prophets, both in the Jewish and in the Iranian religion, are said to have held frequent conferences with the Almighty. In fact, those two religions are the only ones where the Lord takes supreme command, and directs the

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[9] Hosea, ch. 14, v. 1.

[10] Bahman Yast, ch. 3, § 40.

[11] Bam Yt., § 9.

[12] I ought, after all these sayings about visions and prophets, to state that I have very serious doubts whether any man, at any period of the world, could forecast the

battle against Satan. In nearly every chapter of the Pentateuch it is, "The Lord said unto Moses," or Abraham, or somebody; and in the older Avesta, "The Bountiful One (the Lord) told me (Zoroaster) the best word for mortals," etc.[13] And in the later Avesta and the Vendidad, Mazda (the Lord), *on request*, talks to Zoroaster and directs him from day to day. Still the Lord is rather partial to Moses, for he *directs him* without any request whatever.

Moses could stretch forth his arm toward heaven and call down "thick darkness in all the land," so dark that people could not see one another for three days.[14] The Lord further honored Moses, for he not only attended his obsequies, but absolutely acted as his undertaker.[15] But he did not put up a tombstone, for "no man knoweth his sepulchre unto this day." As an offset to this, the Lord sent his angel, Vohu-Mano, and piloted Zoroaster up to heaven, for a special conference, where the brilliancy was so great that he could not see his own shadow.[16]

§ 5. As marvelous as these things appear, more won-

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future for any great length of time, and then not in a vision. A clear-headed man might, on a given state of facts, say as to a battle, or a storm, or a drouth, judge something of the immediate future; possibly, matters concerning a nation, he might predict that in a few years, matters would be so-and-so. Possibly he might guess correctly on ten or twenty years.

[13] Yas. 45, §§ 3 to 8, Vol. 31, S. B. E.

[14] Exodus 10; 22 and 23.

[15] Deuteronomy, ch. 34.

[16] Zad Spar., ch. 21, § 14, Vol. 47, S. B. E.

drous things are told of Joshua.[17] He was battling the Amorites, down there at Gibeon, and had chased them up beyond Beth-horon, with great slaughter, and the day was waning. So he said: "Sun, stand thou still, and thou moon, in the valley of Ajalon." And the sun *stood still,* and the moon stayed until the Jews had avenged themselves upon their enemies. So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day." All this, so that Joshua, and those idol-worshipping Hebrews, could "avenge themselves upon their enemies."

Now, the sun has eight primary planets, which circle round him. Some of them are one thousand times larger than our little earth. There are eighty-five asteroids, besides numerous comets and moons. We know that the sun is rushing through space at the rate of about one million miles per day, in the direction of the Northern constellation, and was going in that direction when Joshua was down there slaying the Amorites. And the sun was, then, as now, carrying Mercury and Venus, Earth and Mars, the asteroids and Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune along with him. The sun is six hundred times greater than all of his satellites combined, and he is moving around a center so vast that it takes him about eighteen millions of years to complete his circuit. Yet Joshua, so the record says, halted this whole vast, wonderful constellation; so that he might murder some Amorites. He

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[17] Joshua, ch. 10, v. 12 to 14. The writer of Joshua believed the Earth to be stationary, and that the sun was the Earth's satellite. He would not have made that mistake in 1902. He would have been differently inspired.

not only compelled our sun to stand still (if the record be true), but the puny word of that robber chief, either halted all the millions of worlds about us, at the same time, or threw them out of balance and into confusion. Which was it? What a fortunate thing for the corn, the barley, and the oats, that he compelled the sun to stand still, only *one* day.

We have mentioned, elsewhere, about the three unborn sons of Zoroaster[18] who are to be born of virgins, at different periods of the world, and thus finally to bring about its renovation and the millennium. The first of these sons, Hushedar, when be becomes thirty years of age, is to have a conference with the Lord, and when he comes away from that meeting he will be endowed with such infinite power that he will cry to the sun, "Stand still!" and the sun will stand still *ten days and nights.* This miracle is to prove his divine mission, so that the people will fully believe in the good religion of Mazda. Night settles down upon the earth, and Mithra, the Lord of Wide Pastures, cries out: "O, Hushedar! restorer of the Good Religion! cry to the sun thus: 'Move on,' for the world in all its zones, is dark."[19] Hushedar orders the sun to "move on", and the sun obeys, and all mankind believe in the good religion.

Observe that the sun is not made to stand still, and thus prolong the time for *slaughtering* mankind, as with Joshua. The Persian fiction was written to give consolation to those people in the dark days of their faith. But

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[18] See note at end of Third Chapter.
[19] Bahman Yt., ch. 3, §§ 46 and 48.

the prophecy hath never yet been fulfilled; for Hushedar, in his coming, is many centuries behind time. Possibly the Virgin who is to give birth to him hath not yet herself been born. Evidently there is a miscarriage somewhere here, for I must assume that the Persian was fully as much inspired as the writer of the Joshua fiction. These things are mentioned here only to emphasize the extent to which ignorant credulity will go. For the Jews still believe in Joshua, and the remnant of Zoroaster's followers are still waiting for Hushedar to come.

CHAPTER XVII.

SACRIFICES. THE HOLY FIRES. THE TEST AT THE BRIDGE. HELL OF THE JEWS AND IRANIANS. THE MARVELOUS IN ALL RELIGIONS.

§ 1. Mankind, as far back as our records go (and we now have printed books[1] at least nine thousand years old) has been a worshipper of God, and "of strange Gods." He has worshipped the sun, the moon, the stars, the clouds. These Gods he could see, and they were the best Gods that he knew. Different nations have worshipped different Gods. Egypt was given to animal worship, and particularly to Apis, the sacred bull. The worship of this animal was carried to such a pitch that when the bull died he was laid away with great solemnity in a costly sarcophagus, hewn into solid granite. The Hebrews worshipped a Golden Calf, and the struggle of Moses and the prophets was to teach them to serve the true God.

When destroying winds and furious storms burst upon early man he supposed the Gods were angry, and he poured libations and offered sacrifices to appease them.

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[1] Nippur, a city much older than Babylon, has discovered to the world printed records three thousand years beyond Genesis. And Babylon had stamped brick, and a library nine or ten thousand years ago. Let us not falter, even if we find that the worm and the lizard are our distant relatives.

Lambs and goats were slain and laid upon bloody altars to appease them. But the Egyptians forbade the use of swine as an offering. The Hebrews, during their long bondage there, copied this and carried it with them, hence their hatred of *swine to this day.*

Sometimes these bloody sacrifices reached so far that children were burned to honor an offended Deity. The Jews carried this matter to such an extent "that they sacrificed unto devils."[2] God was supposed to be more highly pleased with the "firstlings of the flock" than with the fruits of the field.[3] And the priests wrote it down that none must appear before the Lord empty handed.[4] This matter of blood sacrifice went to great extremes. Solomon, at the dedication of his temple, as we have mentioned, sacrificed vast numbers of sheep and oxen.[5]

The later Avesta tells us that Vistaspa offered up one hundred horses, one thousand oxen, and ten thousand lambs to propitiate the Goddess of Waters, and obtain victories over the worshippers of Daevas. But nowhere in the older Avesta is there any mention that Zoroaster offered any sacrifice whatever. He tells his people that his doctrines are new, and "till now unheard."

They are doctrinal vows which will deliver the people from the harmful Lie, and save them to righteousness.[6]

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[2] Deut. 32; 17.

[3] Gen. 4; 4 and 5.

[4] Exodus 23; 15.

[5] Was second Chronicles written after Aban Yast? If so, it explains *why* Solomon sacrificed so many more animals than Vistaspa. 2d Chronicles, 7.

[6] Yas. 31, 1.

§ 2. There have been those who claim that one of the deities which Zoroaster and his followers worshipped was Fire. And the Persians have, in many books, been called "Fire-Worshippers." So great a Zoroastrian scholar as Max Müller says: "In many parts of the Avesta fire is spoken of with great reverence, but those who speak of the Zoroastrians as *fire worshippers* should know that the true followers of Zoroaster abhor that very name." [7]

Zoroaster himself says: "Fire is an offering of praise." [8] Again, he says: "Thy fire's flame is strong to the Holy Order". The truth about this matter is that fire was used as a personified Symbol of Divine Power. Bread and wine in the Eucharist, are symbols of the body and blood of Jesus; but his followers do not worship the symbols, neither did the Parsis worship the symbol. Did Moses, when he stood before the flaming Altar, worship the flame? Nay, verily. Nor did the Parsis worship the fires as Holy Beings.

Now, the "Lord's fire is in Zion," [9] but the devout soul will neither worship the *fire* nor *Zion*, but the Lord only.

The strongest utterance on this matter is found in the Avesta [10] in the words of Zoroaster himself: "We pray for Thy Fire, O, Ahura! strong through righteousness; swift and powerful, in many wonderful ways, to the house, with joy, receiving it".

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[7] Max Müller, in his preface to the Upanishads, Vol. 1, Part 1, P. XXII.

[8] Yas. 43, § 9.

[9] Isaiah 31; 9.

[10] Avesta, ch. 34, § 4.

Now, while it is true that they had their sacred fires, and an angel of fire (Burzim-Mitro), they neither worshipped the fires nor the angel. Vistaspa, after his conversion, established a sacred fire on Mount Revand;[11] but there is no record anywhere that he worshipped it. To charge the Parsis with worshipping fire is to charge them with bowing to idols made by their own hands.

§ 3. The Zoroastrian creed was, meanwhile, gaining ground. Just how fast it is impossible to tell. But after Vistaspa's conversion, he (Vistaspa) began to use force, and it is said he killed some of his subjects because they would not accept the creed. Gamaspa, the prime minister, and Frashoštra, his brother, and Zarir, the king's brother, and Hutaosa, the king's wife, and, in fact, the whole court, having accepted the new religion, the people began to fall in line with considerable alacrity. It is always so, the morals or religion of a court is like a disease, infectious. The people in those ignorant times thought they could not be far wrong if they followed the king and his court. Even some of the Turanians became converted; and Yasna, forty-six, mentions Fryana, a powerful border tribe, who accepted the new faith. These, and all others who will cause the settlements to thrive in goodness and piety, the Seer declares, shall, when they approach the Judge's Bridge[12] not miss their path and fall, but shall dwell with Ahura through joyful deliverance.

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[11] This mountain is supposed to be in Khorassan, about Lat. 37, Lon. 57, and about 250 miles east of southern extremity of the Caspian.

[12] Kinvad Bridge. See ch. 10, § 1.

And again is repeated the warning, that the conscience of the wicked, smitten with remorse, shall then confront him and cause him to fall into the abyss.

This frequently bringing to our notice the crucial test at the Bridge is a matter for thoughtful consideration: The righteous, meeting an approving conscience, which gives him gracious welcome and an assurance of safe passage to the land of the leal. The wicked, confronted and convicted, by his burned and seared conscience, sees the awful chasm yawning to swallow him up. Is not this doctrine of meeting one's conscience at the Bridge simply the doctrine that the mind is not only its own accuser, but that it administers its own chastisement? How can there be any other than a mental heaven and a mental hell? If there be, somewhere, in this mighty Universe two such places as heaven and hell, is it not the mind that rejoices in one and suffers in the other? The body does not go to the Bridge, it rots in the grave. The worms eat it, or the flames, or waves destroy it. And, if it be true, as stated in second Peter, chapter 3, that the elements will melt with fervent heat, and the earth and the works therein, be *burned* up, then all bodies will be so thoroughly incinerated that hell itself can burn them no more.

But I am told the dead will be resurrected. Will they be resurrected *before* the earth and its works therein are burned? For if resurrected *before* the earth is burned, then it will be rather a *warm time* for the righteous as well as the wicked. If resurrected after the earth is burned up, those poor resurrected bodies will be worse off than Noah's dove; for there will not only be no rest for the soles of the feet, but no ark to go into. Poor

things! Ah! says some one, "the Lord will take care of the righteous." Yes, but He burned up their earth, and everything on it; and their resurrected bodies must be fed. How about this? Well, he is going to make a new heaven and a new earth. Ah! just so. But it took Him millions of years to make the earth which He destroyed. What did he burn it up for? You mistake. He made it in six days. Did He? Only six days? Well, the poor resurrected bodies will get pretty hungry even in six days. And, besides, you have not answered why he burned up the six-day world. You mistake again. They are spiritual bodies. If that be so then He did not resurrect the body that went down into the grave—the flesh and blood body. Oh! yes, He did. They were all resurrected, but were changed in a twinkling. Changed! Then what became of the flesh, and blood, bodies? O! after the resurrection the mortal bodies are not needed. We have spiritual bodies. But, again, what becomes of the flesh and blood bodies? Are they floating around in space? Please answer. God, we are told, will see to that. The resurrected will not need them. Then, why were those bodies resurrected at all?

But St. Paul says: "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen."[13] The answer is: If Christ was merely a *man,* then *his body did not rise*; if He was a God, it proves nothing. It is a flagrant *non sequiter.*

§ 4. The New Testament tells us that "the wicked shall be severed from the just." Now, what is to happen

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[13] 1st Corinthians, ch. 15, v. 13.

to *their* bodies?[14] Are they to be resurrected; and, if so, for what purpose? The John Calvin stripe of Christians will reply that they were resurrected to meet their fate—their doom. What is their doom? Jesus says (?) that at the end of the world, all those who offend, and them which do iniquity, shall be cast into a furnace of fire, and "there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."[15] Even angels are cast down to hell and put in chains and darkness.[16] But the eyes of the wicked are not burned out; for the rich man, in hell, lifted up his eyes and *saw Lazarus, afar off,* in Abraham's bosom. It is possible that the rich man may have just dropped in and the "flame which tormented him" had not yet burned his eyes out. Perhaps this whole thing is only a figure of speech.

There is, however, communication between heaven and hell; for Abraham and the rich man held an extended conversation, wherein Abraham informed the sinner that there was "a great gulf fixed between the two places" which nobody could cross.[17] But "the fire is *everlasting*"; and that there should be no misunderstanding about this matter it is twice repeated in the same chapter.[18]

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[14] Matt., ch. 13; 49.

[15] Matt. 13, v. 40 to 50.

[16] There is a little discrepancy here between the hell into which the angels were thrust (2d Peter, ch. 4), and the rich man's hell. He was in "the flame", and flames mean light, brightness. The angels were chained in darkness. Darkness is the Persian hell.

[17] Luke, ch. 16, v. 19 to 31. The reader will notice that the Persian Bridge fable appears in this *"Gulf" fable, also of Abraham.*

[18] Matt., ch. 25, v. 41 to 46.

Now, as we have elsewhere stated, Zoroaster's hell did not burn. He says: "for the wicked the worst life; for the Holy, the best mental state."[19] Again he speaks of the long wounding of the wicked, and of the two battling sides;[20] the truthful and the liar; and for the liar, long life shall be his lot in darkness, foul shall be his food. "Such a life, O! ye vile, your own evil deeds will bring upon you."[21] It must not be overlooked that in the Persian hell they keep them on foul food, but the Christian hell is so severe that they will not give them even a "drop of water."

The fact is, the Christian hell is full of contradictions. How long can a man live in the flames and without water? Not everlastingly. But, I am told that all these hell matters, in Matthew and Luke, etc., are merely parables or figures of speech. It must be said in reply that they are set forth by the same authority, and with the same earnestness, that heaven is promised to the just. Possibly, therefore, all that is said about heaven is simply a figure of speech. Perhaps Zoroaster's foul food for the wicked, and weal and immortality for the righteous, are parables, or figures of speech. The Persian says the wicked are a seed from the evil mind; they are children of perversion, astray from the living Lord, and His righteousness, and that the evil spirit enters and governs them.[22] Paul copies him almost exactly when he calls

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[19] Yas. 30, § 4.
[20] Yas. 31, § 3.
[21] Yas. 31. §§ 20 and 21.
[22] Yasna 32, §§ 3 to 5.

Elymas, the sorcerer, "a child of the devil, full of all subtlety and mischief, perverting the ways of the Lord."[23] Jesus, himself, follows Zoroaster, when he says, "The works of the world (the unrighteous) are evil."[24]

§ 5. All religions, as we have said, deal in the marvelous, but the dogmas of the Jewish and Christian religions surpass all others in the extravagance of their claims and in the arrogance with which they are put forth. I shall only notice one or two of the ridiculous and absurd claims of the old Jewish religion. Does any sane man really believe that the Almighty spake unto Moses, "face to face, as a man speaketh unto a friend?"[25] Is it probable that the Lord, on Mount Sinai, gave unto Moses "two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the *finger of God.*"[26] The Lord never does for man what man can do for himself. Moses was skilled in all the learning of Egypt, and he, himself, no doubt, wrote those commandments. Is it true, as Moses states, that "the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables?"[27] Moses, we know, got mad and broke the tables which the Lord had written with his finger; and then the Lord directed him to write them after the tenor of the first ones; and it took him forty days, and he did not have anything to eat or drink in all that time.[28]

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[23] Acts 13, v. 6 to 10.
[24] John 7; 7.
[25] Exodus 33; 11.
[26] Exodus 31; 18.
[27] Exodus 33; 11.
[28] Exodus 34; 28.

We are educated from childhood to believe these things (at least, I was), and after mature years, it seems almost desecration to push these idols from their pedestals. There are just as improbable things in the Persian Bible, told of Zoroaster, and yet we give them no credit whatever, simply because we have not been taught to believe them. Now, while many men have been valiant for falsehood, they merely mistook her form for that glorious Goddess of Truth. They simply erred, not wilfully, but through false education, or false reasoning. Shall we condemn them? Shall we roast them in a furnace of fire? Or shall we have charity "which is not puffed up, and which thinketh no evil?"

CHAPTER XVIII.

EGYPT AND IRAN. CHRISTIAN RELIGION BASED ON ZOROASTRIANISM.

§ 1. Whence came the idea into the world of punishment at Kinvad Bridge? Who brought it here? Was it some poet, who lived before Zoroaster, or some early Milton, whose fertile brain pictured Gods and Devils at war? Of this we are certain: the Gathas precede any other mention of it from any source, Egypt and India possibly excepted. If Zoroaster originated it, he certainly drew an awful picture of the unpenitent falling into that frightful abyss. Perhaps the picture itself is only the climax of his theory of two contending spirits, and two striving classes, which he saw about him; the honest tillers of the soil, and the robber bandits who slaughtered the herds and laid waste the fields. Was his mind poetical as well as philosophical; and did he paint the Bridge, and the terrifying chasm beneath it, to frighten the robbers?

He clearly taught the immortality of the soul, which Moses did not do. Did the Iranian learn this from the Egyptians and did he transplant it into his own country? If the Chronology of our Bible be correct (?), Noah and his Ark were afloat about four thousand two hundred years ago. At that time the priests of Egypt were teaching the immortality of the soul.[1] They were not inter-

[1] The doctrine of the immortality of the soul was in

rupted by the flood, because it did not reach as far as Egypt.

Osiris, the good God, had his angels or helpers; and Set, the Evil Deity, was there with *his* devils. But the flood was not. Had the religion of the Nile, before Zoroaster's day, penetrated to the Oxus, and did he merely change the name of Osiris to Ahura-Mazda, and Set to Angra-Mainyu? We have said, in a former chapter, that the separation of the Aryan tribes took place fully forty three hundred years ago. How far beyond that time, it is impossible at present to state. But if Zoroaster was on earth four thousand years ago, he may have heard of Osiris and Set; of immortality; and of the Judge of the Dead; and of sacrifices;[2] and oblations. All those matters were familiar to the people of Egypt at least forty-three centuries ago. But if Zoroaster borrowed from them he reversed some things of vital importance.

The Egyptians were religious but not excessively truthful. They did not confess and repent of their sins, as in other religions, but met all charges with a flat denial. The soul, after death, was supposed to present itself before Osiris for trial. Set, the demon God, was there to prefer charges, and seize the wicked. Here, instead of admitting faults, and asking clemency, the soul of the dead, however bad his life may have been, replied: "I have not lied; I have not caused suffering; I have not

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the world about 2,380 years B. C. That is about 4,282 years ago. It cannot at present be traced much beyond that.

[2] The Jews learned of sacrifices, and copied from the Egyptians.

murdered nor committed fraud; I have not cheated by false weights, nor committed adultery, nor stolen; I have loved God, clothed the naked, fed the poor, given water to the thirsty." Every one answered all questions favorably, or he was snatched and carried off to the underworld. Did Zoroaster change this trial of the soul before Osiris to the trial at the Bridge? If he did he compelled the guilty soul to speak its own condemnation. In nearly every Gatha he assails the Lie-Demon: "Abjure the Evil Mind, and that lying sin, which is, alas! a familiar fault indulged in by the people. Banish falsehood from among you. I abjure it and call earnestly on all to follow the straight paths of truth, thereby gaining life in the Blessed Realm."[3]

§ 2. Now, it is possible, but somewhat questionable, that the Iranian Seer lived two thousand four hundred years B. C. But on the other hand, ethnologists find, in the language of Egypt, so very many sanscrit words that they look to India as the cradle of Egypt's language. Moreover, the skulls of the oldest mummies are exactly like the skulls of the Caucasian race. The pendulum thus swings back to the far East. The reasoning is nearly the same, as if some great cataclysm should overtake the earth and destroy the evidences of civilization so far as to make it doubtful whether the English language was formed in England or America; and the proof should be found, that in the sixteenth century it was the language of England. And the further proof found, that Plymouth Rock and Jamestown were not settled until 1620

[3] Yas. 33, §§ 4 to 8.

by people from England. The evidence, therefore, would be irresistible that England was the birthplace of that language.

The proof in favor of India being the cradle of the Egyptian tongue may not be as certain as that England is the original home of the English language, but it may be added that no Egyptian words are found in the Hindu tongue, but Hindu words are plentiful in Egypt. How did they get there? While language is perpetually changing, the roots of all languages remain permanent. Sanscrit, itself, is certainly the daughter of a language so old that we know neither its age nor its origin. So that while it is possible that Zoroaster may have copied from Egypt, it is also possible that Egypt borrowed from him forty-three centuries ago. But Egypt has a vast record, and if her chronology be correct the probabilities are against the Iranian. For her first Dynasty, that of Menes, according to M. Mariette, began five thousand and four years B. C., or nearly one thousand years before the world was created, according to Genesis. Beyond Menes, the centuries stretch out indefinitely, and some venturesome chronologists have fixed her date more than nine thousand years before Jesus came. It may be that neither borrowed from the other; that each originated its own.

The wild Indians of the West, and the wilder men in the Islands of the Ocean, who never heard of Egypt or Iran, have their deities and their religions. Did they borrow; and, if so, from whom did they borrow? The untutored Indian of to-day "sees God in the clouds, and hears him in the wind," as did the Aryans and Egyptians

eight or ten thousand years ago. Only a century or so back, if a man had made the assertion that much of the Christian religion was borrowed from the Persians he would have been most fortunate to have escaped personal injury, and he might have lost his head. Religious intolerance, in past centuries, has hunted to death victims by the scores, by the hundreds, by the thousands, and by the tens of thousands. Within a century mobs have howled after what they termed heretics and fanatics, like wolves on the scent of blood.[4]

Religions, as we have said, are not born; they grow; they change with the changing centuries. What a revolution did Jesus make in the old Mosaic religion. But does any one believe that if Jesus had not been born that we would still be slaughtering goats and rams to appease an angry God? The religion of to-day is less bloodthirsty than the Calvinism of four hundred years ago. And as bad as Calvin was, he was surely an improvement on many of the Popes who lived before him.

Our religion is slowly changing, and in the centuries to come we shall have, if we keep on, a religion without furnaces of fire, and lakes of fire and brimstone, and Kinvad Bridges for the wicked.

§ 3. But man, with all his infirmities of mind and heart, has climbed out of the depths so far that nearly all

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[4] It is probable that if Paul had not written the eighth chapter of Romans, all that Isaiah and Matthew had said about "election" would have dropped to the ground. How did Paul know that God "elected" certain ones and passed others by?

transgressions are punished only with a view to reformation. Zoroaster lived in too early a day to see this. Shall man be more gentle, loving and forgiving than his Creator? But even when man inflicts the death penalty it is roses and sunshine by the side of roasting everlastingly in a furnace of fire. The truth about this matter is, that man of the twentieth century is going to put the God of the first century and the God of the nineteen hundred years ago on trial. Every new religion, and every reformation of an old religion, puts the God of the old religion on trial, and from century to century this trial will go on. It will go on as long as the question is asked: Is there, after the death of the body of the wicked, a burning in a furnace of fire? That question is, and must ever be, of such surpassing importance to mankind that he will not rest with the supposed prophecies, and promises, and threatenings of ancient days.

The Iranian may ask: How did Zoroaster find out about the abyss, and the Bridge, and the demons under it? Every thinking man will inquire: How did Jesus know about the furnace of fire, and about Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, and the rich man in hell? Who told him about those things? Is it any wonder that some of us doubt, when his personal friends,[5] *his very disciples,* doubted?

When we are told "that his *body* was carried up into

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[5] Matt. 28; 17.

[6] Jesus says, after his crucifixion, when he ate the fish and the honey-comb, that he is not a spirit; Luke 24; 39 to 51, and "he was carried up into heaven".

heaven," why should we not doubt? How did Zoroaster know that "Mazda established evil for evil, and happy blessings for the good?" And that in Creation's *final change,* Mazda, "with bounteous spirit, and Sovereign power, will adjudge evil to the evil, and blessings to the righteous"?[7] Here is the earliest mention of the Lord's coming, at creation's final dissolution, to be found in any writing. Even those who claim that the Iranian Seer lived only about six hundred years before the Christian era must admit that Zoroaster makes the first and earliest direct and unqualified prediction or guess that the earth shall pass away. Jesus copies the Seer, when he says that the tares are children of the wicked one, and that at the *end of the world* the angels will gather the good into the kingdom, where they will shine forth as the sun, but the wicked shall be cast into a furnace of fire. Zoroaster does not particularize so much as Jesus, but the thoughts are the same; and those thoughts and words had been in the world, and had been considered and believed by many millions of people for centuries before the man of Galilee came.

The Zoroastrian faith was the religion of Cyrus, the Persian King, who released the Jews from their Babylonian captivity. Among the captives were the prophets

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[7] This is a remarkable passage (Gathas Yas. 43, §§ 5 and 6) in that here is the first *direct mention* that there shall be a final *change in the creation.* Christ and the apostles, from this hint, preached that the world should be destroyed. Jesus, in Matthew 13, 37 to 55, uses Zoroaster's idea.

and scribes, Ezra and Ezekiel, and many of the learned of Jerusalem were there. Their captivity lasted for a long generation. Those captives, we know, on their return, were filled with Persian ideas about religion, and those ideas afterwards cropped out plainly in many ways. The Persian Bible, the Avesta, was in Babylon and in Persepolis written in gold letters on twelve thousand ox-hides. Persian ideas of God's dealings with the just and the unjust had floated along down the stream; were considered and believed; and, finally, were written down by Matthew in chapter thirteen.

§ 4. Persia, from Cyrus onward to the battle of Marathon, was the greatest and most civilized and powerful nation on earth. Rome was yet in her infancy. Modern Europe was not yet born. Greece was not a unit, her people were divided, and only the terror of Persian arms, for a brief period, held them together. Persia gave law and religion at that time to the world, and that religion was the gospel of Zoroaster. Jesus afterwards, whether God or man, followed it; preached it; emphasized it in every possible way; and was finally nailed to the cross for it.

With all due honor to him who could die for opinion's sake, how was it, or how could it be possible for Jesus to announce a better or purer doctrine than that so often repeated by Zoroaster, his predecessor? viz.: "Good thoughts, good words and good deeds". Do not those three things embrace all there is, or can be, in any religion? Can the most devout saint add anything to them? "Yes, he can," says some one; "he can love Jesus." But if he has good thoughts he will love not only Jesus, but

all the world besides, and God supremely. If he has good thoughts he is pure in heart. Now, good thoughts are the very foundations upon which are builded good words and deeds, always and everywhere.

Love God and thy neighbor, are the two great commandments.[8] But how can a man do either unless he be first filled with good thoughts? Paul preached the same doctrine; and all true religions in the world are builded upon Zoroaster's three all-embracing words.

The trouble with Jesus' religion (and there is a trouble with it) is that it makes God out a very demon in punishment. The infliction, by roasting a poor wretch for a hundred millions of years, and when that time shall have elapsed, that he will then only be, as it were, at the door-steps of his fate, is too awful to believe. Could the very old Devil do worse; could any monster be more cruel? Could a mother be happy in glory, knowing that her son or daughter was screaming in the flames? Zoroaster's hell, as we have said, is terrible; but it is far less *barbarous* than Jesus' hell.

Let us close this chapter by adding, that it must be that God is a God of mercy, and that remembering our infirmities, He will deal with us as a father dealeth with an erring son. Here we see "through a glass darkly". There, if there be a there, we will prune our faults, and try to fill our minds with good thoughts which will bring a plentiful harvest of good words and deeds.

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[8] Matt. 22; 36 to 40.

CHAPTER XIX.

DEATH OF ZOROASTER. EXITS OF PROPHETS. ZOROASTER'S AGE. DOWNFALL OF ZOROASTRIAN FAITH.

The final victory for Vistaspa's forces mentioned in chapter fourteen gave peace to Iran for fifteen or twenty years, possibly longer. But another bloody contest is at hand. Arjasp, during this period of peace, has been busy gathering a great army for a second invasion. He knows that the brave Isfander, by reason of calumnies, false and malicious, is languishing in a dungeon. Vistaspa is enjoying an indolent peace in Seistan. Balkh has but a small garrison, and the opportunity is inviting. Forthwith Arjasp launches his thunderbolts of war. Balkh is stormed and taken, and Lorhasp, the father of Vistaspa, is slain. Eighty priests, at the altar are cut down, and with them perishes Zoroaster, the father and immortal founder of the Iranian religion, his blood extinguishing the sacred flame, and his dying lips, we may well believe, invoking Ahura-Mazda to shelter the new-born faith.

In this emergency, Isfander is called from his prison and placed in command of Iran's forces. He is a born warrior, and his inspiring presence so nerves the defeated troops that they turn upon Arjasp and overwhelm him with disastrous defeat. But Isfander falls at the moment of victory. Arjasp is, however, so signally beaten that

with the remnant of his army he flees back to Turan, never again to make war on the Iranians or their faith.

If we credit the Dabistan[1] a Turk, named Turbaratur, rushed upon the Prophet, sword in hand, but the Seer could fight as well as pray. For a time he defended himself with his rosary, but at last fell pierced to the heart by his adversary's sword.[2]

The Avesta was not as kind to Zoroaster as Deuteronomy was to Moses; for although he fought the Lord's battles manfully to the end, and accomplished a great work for the Iranians, still the Lord did not, as with Moses, even go to his funeral.[3]

After Zoroaster's death many marvelous versions of his exit crept into history. This at once stamps him as a most extraordinary character. For when he went down it was not merely a ripple on the surface of the stream, and then eternal silence, but there was tumult, noise, and confusion. Distant nations heard the sound of his name, and its echoes and reverberations are yet sounding along the shores of time. One writer makes the Seer so extravagantly great that in his life time he, with magic art, ruled the stars, conjured with them until they became so restive under his power that one of them, in a fit of jeal-

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[1] The Dabistan is a Persian work published about three hundred years ago.

[2] Dadistin, ch. 72, § 8, has it that Tur I Bradrash, the enemy of Zoroaster's childhood, finally killed him. But I doubt it. It would make Tur very old to be in an army.

[3] Deut., ch. 34. I never could understand, if the Lord acted as undertaker, why he did not put up a tombstone for Moses.

ousy, shot forth a stream of fire which consumed his body, but charioted away his soul to heaven.[4]

§ 2. There have been many miraculous exits since Zoroaster's distant day. Elijah, the Tishbite, about nine hundred years B. C., mounted in a chariot of fire.[5] But he had fiery steeds, and they, no doubt, hauled him up in safety. He probably was not afraid to trust himself to a chariot of fire, for he had likely heard of the angel who came to see Mrs. Manoah about Samson, who, when the interview was over, ascended in a flame. But Mr. Manoah, thinking the angel would get burned to death in the flame, was terribly frightened and fell down on his face, and said to his wife: "we shall surely die." [6] But they did not die, for the scriptures tell us that "the woman later on bore a son, and called his name Samson."

Tacitus mentions an affair equally strange. A preternatural being, above the size of man, he says, appeared unto Ptolemy in a vision, commanding him to bring the Statue of the God, Serapis, then in Pontus, into Egypt. That by this compliance prosperity would come to the Kingdom, and greatness to the nation. The vision was then seen instantly mounting to heaven in a column of fire.[7]

Empedocles, a Greek philosopher, who lived in the fifth century B. C., was also called away in a blaze of

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[4] Clementine Recog., written about the time of our canonical Gospels. It was not unusual, in those days, for Seers to go up in chariots of fire.

[5] 2d Kings, ch. 2, v. 11.

[6] Judges, ch. 13; 26.

[7] Tacitus history, Book 4, § 83.

glory. But those who doubted had their doubts confirmed by finding a peculiar pair of sandals, such as he wore, thrown up by an eruption of Etna. Thence, they said, "he has thrown himself into the crater of the volcano, hoping that people will believe him translated."[8]

Tacitus was born about twenty years after Jesus was crucified, and wrote contemporary history, yet the ordinary Bible reader will stoutly discredit his story of the supernatural, and at the same time will eagerly gulp down the fables of Elijah and Manoah. If asked the reason for this, the only answer we can give is that it is all a matter of education.

§ 3. Zoroaster died at about the age of seventy-seven years; that is, fifty-seven years after his acceptance of the religion.[9] Having labored during that long period in instructing his people to cultivate good thoughts to all mankind. This would, in his philosophy, check wars and tumults and finally banish sin and suffering from the earth.

The great victory, mentioned above, whereby Arjasp and his army were defeated and driven back to Turan in utter ruin, compensated somewhat for the death of the Prophet. For, we may well believe, that if the Iranian army had been overthrown, dispersed and destroyed, and

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[8] Empedocles lived about two thousand four hundred years ago, yet his law of identity is only lately becoming emphasized. He insisted that all life, including plants and animals, are but links in an extended chain. That man himself is but a link in that chain, which connects him with higher orders of life, angels, etc.

[9] Dinkard, ch. 7, § 12.

the Prophet slain, there would have been a sudden termination of the Zoroastrian faith and creed. The world's welfare was, no doubt, promoted by the success of the Iranians. Waterloo gave peace to Europe, but the victory over the Turans was worth to the world innumerable Waterloos.

With the Iranians defeated neither the Persian religion nor the Avesta would scarcely have been heard of. The map of the world, and the religion of the world, would have been changed. Bandits and plundering would have been the order of the day for centuries. There would have been no Cyrus to send the Jews home from exile. In fact, there would have been no Persian nation to subdue them and carry them off into exile. Ezra and Esdras, Nehemiah and Tobit, would have sung in different strains. Ezekiel would not have had his vision of the valley of dry-bones, and the resurrection of the body.[10] And, not carrying these matters too far, would Jesus have known anything about the resurrection if the Avesta had never been written?

Had not Iran won on that bloody field, the Christian religion would to-day, probably, be following, with some modifications, the old Mosaic creed; for Zoroaster's doctrines, intensified as to punishment, and heaven shown in somewhat plainer colors, would not have come down to us. But with Arjasp defeated the banner of Zoroastrianism was lifted on high. It is certain that his religion was a better one than that which it displaced. Great multitudes came to believe in it, and for more than twelve

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[10] Ezekiel, ch. 37.

hundred years it continued to be the faith, hope and solace of millions of mankind.

§ 4. But evil times at length befell the worshippers of Mazda. The Arabs, in the great battle of Nehavend, which took place about twelve hundred and sixty years ago, near the road from Babylon to Ecbatana, defeated the Persians so utterly that, thereafter, province after province yielded to the conqueror, until finally the Persian nation and Zoroaster's religion went into a decline.[11]

Within one hundred years after this defeat the Arabs, by fire and by sword, by bribery of the nobles, by persecutions and slaughter of the people, succeeded in fastening *their religion* upon most of Mazda's worshippers. Thenceforward their numbers gradually declined until now there is but a mere remnant of less than twenty thousand, of whom most of them reside in or near Bombay. This much may be said of them: They are a sober, industrious, moral people. They are generous and truthful to the utmost. They are good citizens, leading quiet, blameless lives. With them good thoughts, words and deeds are the keys which will unlock the doors of the Kingdom. In truth, they are the lessening remnants of a once great and attractive faith, which, at one period, came near overmastering the world.

Had the Persians defeated Miltiades at Marathon, who can deny but that Zoroaster's religion would have marched triumphantly across Europe? Had James II defeated William, Prince of Orange, in July, 1690, at the battle of the Boyne, the Catholic religion, instead of the

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[11] The battle of Nehavend was fought A. D. 642.

Protestant, might have become the ruling faith of England.

Thus, it is seen, that the destinies of religions, as well as of empires, are sometimes suspended in the balance, to be decided by the strongest battalions. A few shovels full of earth, at the Great South Pass, in the Rocky Mountains, turns one stream towards the Pacific and another towards the Gulf. The destiny of men and nations, and their religions, at times, is changed just as easily.

Is it fate that bears nations, as well as individuals, irresistibly on, and determines their lot? Or does blind chance mix in our affairs, and control us in spite of our buffetings? This much we may conclude, that had the Persians won in the battle with the Arabs, the world would have been better for the victory.

CHAPTER XX.

THE RELIGION OF THE ZEND-AVESTA, AND THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS BRIEFLY COMPARED.

§ 1. Have our ideas, hopes and beliefs about that mysterious "undiscovered country," beyond the final valley and shadow, taken shape and form, and become a fixed part of our civilization, because that great and almost mythical Iranian imagined or pictured the beauties of the eternal shore? Did he teach the world a fairy tale, to soothe the sorrows, and add to the joys, of those whom he saw about him? Was it the imagination of the poet, "which, from airy nothingness gave to Heaven a local habitation and a name?"

Of two things we are certain: The Zamyad-Yast and the Bundahis teach plainly the doctrine of the resurrection.[1] The Gathas again and again teach that the righteous shall live in the happy abode of Ahura, and that destruction shall fall upon the wicked.[2] But the Gathas, while not directly specifying that the *body* shall be raised, leave it somewhat in doubt whether the body, or only the soul, shall enjoy immortal life with Ahura. The later Avesta, and the Bundahis, mention the body as be-

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[1] Bundahis, ch. 30, and Vol. 23, S. B. E., pp. 291 and 292.

[2] Yas. 30, Yas. 28, Yas. 31, Yas. 32, Yas. 33. It is not necessary to recite page after page. They all teach it.

ing resurrected. They saw that the mind acted, or acts, only through the body. If there be no body, they thought there could be no mind. Later writers would say there are spiritual bodies. But even if there be such things as spiritual bodies, they can manifest themselves only through the mediumship in this life of flesh and blood bodies. Luke tells us that "a spirit hath not flesh and bones." [3] We may reply that if the living bodies of men contain spirits, then we see every day spirits inhabiting bodies of flesh and blood.

Did Zoroaster teach, or mean to teach, that we can get along in Ahura's realm *without flesh* and *bones*? He is not specific. But he is specific in teaching immortality. He did not get that idea from Moses, for there is not a single trace of the doctrine of a future life in the Pentateuch. Not only that, but the doctrine of the immortality of the soul was taught in Egypt two thousand three hundred and eighty years before Jesus came. It must, therefore, have been taught in Egypt nearly one thousand years before Moses was born. He was educated there, in the King's Palace, and must have heard of the Ritual of the Dead. He must have known of the Hall of Two Truths, and Osiris sitting in judgment. He was learned in all the lore of Egypt, and therefore knew that the Egyptians held to the doctrine that the soul completed a circuit once in three thousand years. That during that circuit, it must pass through all animals, insects, fishes, birds, etc.,[4] before it again enters the body of man. But

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[3] Luke 24; 39.
[4] Herodotus 2; 123.

as long as the body was preserved the soul did not have to commence its circuit. Embalming, therefore, saved it many years of degradation in those lower forms of life.

Moses knew that the Egyptians did *not believe* or *teach* the doctrine of *retribution* for the sins of the body. As Moses did not teach the immortality of the soul, it was probably because he disbelieved in it. But we are certain that he did not believe in animal worship, for he ordered three thousand Israelites slain for worshipping Aaron's golden calf. (Exodus 32.)

There is one thing, however, which he copied from the Egyptians. The name of God, in their tongue, is Nuk-pu-Nuk. In Exodus, chapter three, it is "*I am that I am*", which in Egyptian is Nuk-pu-Nuk.

§ 2. Moses had *neither devil* nor *hell* in his religion. There was no need or use for them, as a sinner could expiate, or atone, for all his sins by sacrificing a goat, or bull, or a ram. "Moses said unto Aaron, go unto the altar and offer thy sin-offering, and thy burnt offering, and make atonement for thyself, and for thy people, as the Lord commanded." [5]

Zoroaster's religion was more difficult He had devils, big and little, without number; and, as we have seen, Kinvad Bridge, and Hell beneath it. With Moses, the only punishment the wicked received was *in this life,* in controversies with the *righteous.* The judges, in such cases, were ordered to *justify the righteous,* and condemn the wicked, and they might order him beaten with forty stripes.[6] Neither did Moses have any sympathy with the

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[5] Leviticus, 9:7.
[6] Deut. XX, ·5:1.

poor, for he ordered that the poor man should not be countenanced in his cause.[7] Zoroaster's battle was against the wicked, and he longed to be to them a "strong tormentor and avenger." [8] Paul copied him, for he says that Jesus will come "in flaming fire, and take *vengeance* on them that know not the Lord." [9] When the first book of Samuel was written, the author thereof copied the Iranian idea of Hell, for he says "the wicked shall be silent in darkness." But as we approach New Testament times[10] Zoroaster's ideas became more and more plainly incorporated into Jewish thought. In second Esdras, the righteous are promised an inheritance of good things, but the ungodly shall perish.[11] Zoroaster, centuries before, said "the blow of destruction shall fall upon the wicked, but the righteous will gather in the happy abode of Ahura."[12]

When Jesus came he was more particular about describing Hell than Heaven. He tells the wicked they shall roast in fire; [13] and as to Heaven, he says: "In my Father's house are many mansions, if it were not so I would have told you." [14] How He found out about these things, and how Zoroaster learned about the future of the wicked, and the righteous, we are at a loss to state.

§ 3. One thing is noticeable about Jesus' Hell. All

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[7] Exodus 23:3.
[8] Yas. 43:8.
[9] 2d Thess. 1:8.
[10] 1st Samuel, ch. 2, v. 9.
[11] 2d Esdras, ch. 7, v. 17.
[12] Yas. 30, § 10.
[13] Matt. 13; 50.
[14] St. John, 14; 2.

the wicked, of whatever degree; are cast into a furnace of fire. He does not state that for the small sinner the flame shall be any less fierce. All are punished, as we may well conclude, in the same furnace. The murderer of a thousand roasts in the same furnace with him who steals a loaf of bread. Human judgment has improved since that day. Sins are graded, and those of deeper guilt suffer the greater penalty. The Persians were more logical and sensible; they had degrees in Hell. And, as we have seen, they had a place called Hamistaken, a sort of middle ground, where a man's good deeds just fairly balanced his bad ones; he neither got into Heaven nor did he roast in Hell. He was not worthy of the mansion, and he was not bad enough for the furnace. He just browsed around outside, as it were.

The Catholics seized upon Hamistaken and therefrom constructed their Purgatory. Had Dante lived and written his "Divine Comedy" before either Zoroaster or Jesus came, they possibly might have drawn upon him and enlarged somewhat Hell's borders. With nice precision Dante maps out his Inferno into numerous circles or spheres, and divides his culprits according to their offenses. He descends into particulars, and even the unbaptized, though otherwise blameless, he shuts out of Heaven.

Next come the carnal sinners, and these he dashes about with relentless fury in blinding storms. Jesus burns this class in roaring furnaces. But even Dante borrows from the Persian, and though he transforms the dogs, that tear the sinners at the Bridge, into the demon Cerberus, yet that monster is only a ferocious dog in na-

ture, which claws and tears the gluttonous in one of Hell's circles.

The poet is more imaginative than the man of Galilee. He is likewise more just, for it cannot be that he who steals a dollar shall suffer as Nero, who murdered by scores. If there be punishment for an offense, it should be meted out to the offender according to the magnitude of the crime.

It is noteworthy that while Matthew copies a part of the Lord's prayer from Zoroaster,[15] in which he says, "Our Father, thine is the kingdom, thine is the power, and thine is the glory," etc., he yet prays the Lord to "lead us not into temptation." As if the Lord would do such a thing. But what is still more noticeable is that neither Zoroaster, nor Jesus, nor Paul, seem to have a clear conception of Heaven. The Persian wants to dwell in the happy abode of Ahura; the Galileean says, his "Father's house has many mansions;"[16] Paul says, "he has a building of God, a *house* not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." (2d Corinthians, 5) And Paul adds that the "faithful will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air."[17]

§ 4. If there be such a place as Heaven, it is of such infinite importance to mankind that it would seem as

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[15] Yasna 53.

[16] The proper translation of that sentence is: "There are many *rooms* in my Father's house." Does any sane man believe that God lives in a house? Is it a brick, stone or marble house that He lives in? As if God lives in a house!

[17] Thess., ch. 4, v. 17.

though we ought to have been given more particulars about it. But we are told we shall be with God, therefore blessed and happy. Are we not with Him now on this old earth? We see Him here in all of His wonderful works. Does any sane man expect to see Him face to face? The face of the Infinite! That face! Is it a thousand miles long, and ten thousand times that vast reach? God is visible in the stars above, and in the plants at our feet. Besides, is not this world good enough for that wretched fault-finding animal, called man?

We have the most complete picture of Heaven found in any inspired record, in Revelation, wherein John saw a *door opened* in Heaven [18] and beheld a throne, and God sitting on the throne, and four and twenty elders, clothed in white, and four *beasts,* with eyes in front and behind, and those beasts, without rest, saying, "Holy, Holy, Lord God;" and when the beasts said this, the four and twenty elders fall down before the throne and worship Him who sits thereon. But this is not quite all they do. Those elders "cast their crowns before the throne, saying: 'Thou art worthy, O Lord! to receive glory, honor, and power; for Thou hast created all things.' " [19] This is simply a cheap copy of an earthly monarch, and his court, exaggerated considerably by the poet's heated imagination.

The Jew who wrote Revelation had probably read of Zoroaster's audience or conference with Ormazd, and

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[18] They have doors in Heaven, Rev., ch. 4, and windows, Gen., ch. 8, v. 6.

[19] Rev., ch. 4.

simply surpassed the Dinkard in the extravagance of his statements.

Is it possible to believe that the Great I Am, who has millions of worlds to look after, can employ himself, or be entertained by having four beasts, day and night (even if they have power of speech), cry "Holy, Holy, Lord, God"? Truly, such a God is not worthy of worship. Its monotony would soon cause the whole performance to grow tedious. A fifth-rate European King cuts a better figure. Why *belittle* the Almighty with such stuff and nonsense? If Revelation be an allegory, intending to teach virtue and show the doom of vice, the answer is that the ridicule of the Almighty, and His throne, is so great that it defeats its object.

The writer of Revelation says he saw ten thousand times ten thousand (which would be about one hundred million), and all these were saying, with a loud voice: "Worthy the Lamb, riches [20] and wisdom, and honor and glory"; and "every creature in Heaven and on earth, and *under the* earth", said the same. The four beasts thereupon said: "Amen." [21] But this tediousness was broken after awhile; for war always makes exciting times; and they had war in Heaven. That Irish Archangel, Michael, and his angels fought the dragon, and his angels; and "that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world, was cast out into the earth, and his angels with him." [22] Here, again, we have Zoroas-

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[20] Of course a Jew mentions "riches" first. But what does Jesus want riches in Heaven for?

[21] Rev., ch. 4.

[22] Rev., ch. 12, v. 7 to 9.

ter's dualism; and if Revelation be true, that dualism reaches from earth to heaven. It not only invades every part of our world, but it dashes up against the very throne itself. It looks as if sin is in the universe to stay, for the devil himself was only bound for one thousand years, and then turned loose for a season.[23]

If this be all they do in Heaven, will it not be somewhat tedious to the great thinkers of our race? Imagine Socrates, and Aristotle, Newton and Kepler, Darwin and Huxley, Franklin and Emerson, and multitudes of others standing idly by and watching the daily and hourly performance of the four and twenty elders, and the beasts, before the throne. True, an eternity like that would be much less painful than roasting in a furnace, but to quick minds, only less in degree. Of course John really knew nothing more about Heaven than any other wild dreamer. How could we know about it?

We do not believe that Zoroaster held a conference with the Almighty, nor do we believe that John saw the throne. Neither Jesus nor Paul gave us a glimpse of Heaven. How could they? For they had never been there. If, then, there be such a place as Heaven, what then?

Reader, we make to you the following suggestion: Follow the Golden Rule of Zoroaster, and Jesus, and patiently await thy summons across the river.

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[23] Rev., ch. 20.

CHAPTER XXI.

CONCLUSION.

The story of Zoroaster and his religion is ended. He brought a new doctrine into the world, or at least so intensified an old one as to link his name inseparably to it forever.

No history of religions can ever be written without giving him many pages. That he labored sedulously for the material and spiritual welfare of his people no one who will read his words can gainsay. There was, it would seem, a sharp necessity for his appearing as a teacher and guide to the Iranians, and he came in the fullness of time.

The morals of his people were made the better for his coming. He did not make war on the old Aryan Gods,[1] but simply passed them by. He taught that there was one God, Ahura-Mazda, the maker of Heaven and Earth, who would reward man for good deeds, and punish him for bad ones. Where he got this idea, I cannot tell. It may have been announced before him, but if so, that feebler voice is drowned in the great ocean of Zoroaster's fame and name.

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[1] The old Aryan Gods were the sun, moon, earth, the winds and the waters. The Jews burned incense to the sun, the moon, and the planets. 2d Kings, ch. 23, v. 5.

Truth was to him a jewel beyond price or measure. And he so insisted and urged upon his people that they should always, and everywhere, refrain from falsehood and cling to the truth; that for more than two thousand years after his death it was considered an infinite disgrace for a Persian to tell a lie. Four hundred and fifty years before Jesus' day the historian, Herodotus, mentions this as a pleasing trait of the Persian character.

One hundred years ago, there were a few scholars, who claimed that Zoroaster was only a myth; that no such person ever lived; but that class has been overwhelmed by proofs to the contrary. In truth, there is as much certainty of his identity as that Moses, or Joshua, or Plato lived. But this knowledge came to us at a late day. Three hundred years ago Europe slumbered in profound ignorance of a great mine of knowledge awaiting the antiquary.

True, Aristotle, and after him Plutarch, and others, had written of Persia, and her religion, but during the middle ages all interest therein died out.

We now know that the founders of the Christian religion studied Zoroaster, and drew silently, but largely, from him, in forming their own.[2] I have shown this in the preceding pages, and if I live to write the life of Buddha and Jesus, will exemplify that matter still further.

Belief does not change facts, as the following will illustrate: Captain Cook, when circumnavigating the globe, gave some iron nails to the natives of Tahiti. The large nails they believed to be the mothers of the little

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[2] Intro-Vendidad, p. 15

ones, and they placed the little ones in the ground, believing that they would grow. By the side of them they planted some of the mothers, in the belief that a new generation of small nails would be born. But their *belief* did not change the facts. The nails, big and little, to their infinite disgust and chagrin, all rusted.

I close by saying that this book is *not* intended as an attack upon any form of faith. Every man has his own views and ideas about matters beyond the grave. I have mine; and while I treat Jesus and Zoroaster as men, yet I hold that the creed of Zoroaster is, in all essentials, the Golden Rule. For if good thoughts, good words, and good deeds will not unlock the shining Gates, then nothing else will, or can.

As age creeps on, let us not doubt that beyond the myths and delusions of man, and all his follies, there is a power and an Intelligence somewhere, and that if it be for man's weal, that he shall be crowned with immortal life, where happiness shall ever bloom, then blessed be that power, and that Intelligence. But if that Great Intelligence, which we call God, for reasons and purposes known only to Himself, shall deem it best that this life shall "be the Be all and the end all," then without questioning, let us say: "Thy ways, O Lord! are higher and better than man's ways; and thy judgments are altogether just and right."

THE END.

PART SECOND

How the Hebrews Copied from the Hindu Bible



HOW THE HEBREWS COPIED
FROM
THE HINDU BIBLE

CHAPTER I.

FOUR GREAT RELIGIONS: BRAHMANISM, BUDDHISM, CHRISTIANITY, MOHAMMEDISM. WHEN INVENTED—TWO NEW DEITIES.

§ 1. The highways of human progress are lined with the skulls of the slain, for opinion's sake. But in America, and some other favored spots, the worst that can befall a plain talker, is to impale him on a few caustic sentences. But the days of stakes, faggots, and thumb-screws, for him who is not with the majority, are, it is hoped, happily past forever. Nevertheless, that despicable thing called intolerance, still lifts its slimy head, active in all religions. Narrow-minded bigots are found everywhere; and the best way to treat them is to hit them hard, as you would any other reptile, then watch them squirm.

At present, four great religions are seeking to dominate the world. In truth, they almost hold our globe in their grasp. Strange as it may appear, not one of these religions, except Brahmanism, was in existence twenty-five-hundred years ago. Brahmanism is, however,

old. It is older than the Flood. Poets were composing it, centuries before Moses was found, by his mother, in the bulrushes.[1]

The next in point of age, of these four religions, and the greatest in numbers, is Buddhism. Its founder, Buddha, was a Hindu prince, born about 500 years before Jesus.[2] More than thrice the number of all the people now living on our earth, have held to the doctrines, and died in the faith of Buddha. And more than three hundred millions of people, now living in Thibet, Nepaul, China, Japan, Assam and Ceylon, yet cling to the Buddhistic faith. But the land of its birth, after nearly fourteen hundred years of struggle, thrust it forth, and installed Brahmanism in its place.

The next religion is that of Christianity. Jesus, its founder, was born about 1900 years ago. But his religion, like that of Buddha, has been driven from the land of its birth, and the flag of the conqueror waves victoriously over Jerusalem and Galilee. His followers are divided into two great unfriendly, and almost warring camps, protestants and papists; the former numbering about seventy or seventy-five millions, the latter about eighty-five millions. The protestants, in matters of doctrine or creeds, are again subdivided into numerous jarring sects; each one insisting that the other is wrong in its interpretation of what is called "Holy Writ." In

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[1] Some writers think that Moses was the bastard child of Pharaoh's daughter.

[2] Some people maintain that Buddha was born about 543 years B. C. His followers now number three hundred to three hundred and fifty millions.

fact, creed-makers have been busy with the New Testament for the last 1800 years, and are not done yet.

Both wings of this procession, papists and protestants, number, therefore, about one-tenth of the population of the globe. They both believe the old traditions of Moses, and the Hebrews, and later the Jews; and those traditions form a very large part of the christian Bible.

TWO NEW DIETIES.

Moreover, what challenges our attention is that the christians brought forth, for the world to consider, two new deities, until then unknown. Jesus, and the Holy Ghost, had never been seen, known, or heard of until some 1900 years ago. In fact, no one to this day has given, nor can give a reasonable definition of what the Holy Ghost is. If we say it is the Holy Spirit, or the Sanctifier of Souls, is not that definition applicable to God? Is not God a Spirit? If so, then is not the Holy Ghost and God one and the same? If not, what then is the Holy Ghost? Where did it live, before the book of Matthew was written? Where was the Holy Ghost when Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu and the seventy elders, saw the God of Israel up there on the mountain?[3] There are some other questions to ask: If the Holy Ghost is an actual existence, and was here "in the beginning," why did it not save Eve from the serpent there in the Garden?[4] It is said Jesus was in heaven when the foundations of the earth were laid. If so, why

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[3] Exodus XXIV, 9th and 10th.

[4] There are those who maintain that the Holy Ghost is of the female gender.

did He not interpose in that Eden difficulty, and thus save us a world of trouble? What is the use of these new Deities? Can not man approach his maker directly? Must we do business in the ante-room with the office boy? Did the Almighty, after running the world about four thousand years, according to the record, find himself incompetent; and was it necessary to call in these new Gods, as helpers?

§ 2. At Jesus' appearance on earth, we know that the Jews had but one God, and they have only one God yet. Since Jesus' advent we have a Trinity. But the Brahmans had a Trinity more than a thousand years before ours. Did we copy from them? In fact, the Brahmans, in ignorant times, had numerous Gods. As far back as four thousand or forty-five hundred years B. C. they had thirty-three Gods; and divided the universe into three regions, and assigned eleven Gods to each division. They then added Prajapati, the thirty-fourth God, as the Lord of all creatures. They then fell back upon a Trinity; and at last dispensed with all except Brahma as the Creator; but gave him a generous staff of dignitaries.

MOHAMMEDANISM.

The latest religion invented is that of Mohammedanism, which is now about thirteen hundred years old. Before Mohammed's day, the Gods in Arabia were numerous, but Allah was the chief.

Mohammed tells us that the Angel Gabriel came to him one night, and, holding a silken scroll before him, bade him read what thereon was written. On the scroll he read, "Man walketh in delusion here, but that the Lord, the Most High, will call him hence some day to

give an account of himself." Frightened at this, and thinking the incantation, a portent of evil, he related the mysterious occurrence to his wife, who consoled him with the hope that the messenger was of Heaven, and that God had a mission for him. Such was the feeble beginning of a religion that to-day numbers from 110 to 140 millions of followers; and they hold Jerusalem and Galilee firmly against all comers. Mohammedanism has just one God, Allah, and Mohammed is his prophet.

§ 3. Moses spent all his mature years in battling against a plurality of Gods. Is it not, therefore, startling, that Christians, who claim to be the legatees, and beneficiaries of his statutes and commandments, and wiser than all others, should invent two new Deities? And this in opposition to the very first commandment, leveled against polytheism, "I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt have no other Gods before me"? (Ex. 20.) Yet Jesus, we are told, is one with God, and that man can only approach the Almighty through him as our intercessor.

THE TRINITY.

All Christians are baptized in the name of three Gods: the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. We are told that these three form the Trinity, the Triune God, the Godhead. The Hindus, as we have seen, invented the first Trinity; and the Hindoos preached it, believed in it; and if the frosts of age have any claim to our reverence, let us first bow to the three-faced God of the Ganges. The Hindoo trinity long preceded this invention of 1900 years ago; and it is a real pity that they could not have obtained a patent on their trimurti, for it would have saved our divines from many a grotesque position, many a foolish

speech. But even the Hindoos might have had trouble at the Patent Office, for the Egyptians seem to have, previously, invented a trimurti—Osiris, Typhon and Horus. We, however, copy more from India than from Egypt. Brahma is the Hindu Creator; Vishnu or Chrisna is their Christ, their Preserver, or Saviour. Siva is their God of destruction.[5]

The Hindoo Chrisna suffered many Avatars (incarnations) for the benefit of the Hindoos; Jesus only suffered once for all the world. There are yet, in India, many pictures of their trinity or trimurti, showing a three-faced God; one looking east, one west, and one south.

The Christians have never yet gone to the extent of fixing up a three-faced God; but they might as well, for they preach and teach three Gods, and circulate innumerable pictures of one of them. Yet if the Holy Record be true, two of our Deities have been seen; for Moses affirms, in chapter 33, Exodus, that he talked with the Almighty "face to face, as a man speaketh to a friend." [6] If the above were found in the Hindoo Bible, people would sneer at it. Is it not preposterous that about 3400 years ago, the Creator and Ruler of millions of worlds,

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[5] Sir Wm. Jones, the greatest oriental scholar that England ever produced, was a judge ten years at Calcutta; and in one of his lectures he says, that on page 375 of a great Sanskrit dictionary, compiled twenty-one hundred years ago, "Chrisna" is called the "Divine *Spirit in human form.*"

[6] I cannot help thinking that if it had not been for Exodus XX, Moses might have taken a "snap-shot" at his "friend," and thus saved us a world of imaginings.

was found or seen, out there in the bushes, talking "face to face" with that old blood-stained Hebrew? We shall see, further along, that Buddha did not believe this. He ridiculed such a preposterous thing.

Now, lest I be branded as an Atheist, I will at once, and without reservation, write down my creed: I firmly believe in one omnipotent, omniscient Maker and Ruler of the universe. I believe that Jesus was a man; begotten and born after the manner of other men. I have no doubt but that he was nailed to the cross, for the Jews in his time murdered people in that way. I do *not* believe in three Gods, or two Gods. The Trinity, therefore, is eliminated. Let us pass on.

THE UPANISHADS.

§ 4. It is just one hundred years since a Latin translation of the Upanishads[7] was published by Anquetil Duperron,[8] a Frenchman, who had previously translated into French the Zend Avesta—the Persian Bible. Duperron's translation would, probably, have fallen quite still-born had it not been for that wonderful lin-

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[7] It is difficult to render an exact and unquestioned definition of the word Upanishad. Some Orientalists maintain that Upa-ni-shad comes from the root "Sad," preceded by the preposition -ni (down) and upa- (near), expressing the idea of a school where the pupils sit down near the teacher for instruction. Others claim that Upanishad means theological, or philosophical doctrine. Again it is claimed that it means destruction of passion, and ignorance. The Upanishads undertook to set forth the theory or, in other words, to account for the creation of the world.

[8] Duperron made his translation about the year 1775,

guist and classical scholar, Sir William Jones. That great Englishman was master of some thirty languages, including, among others, Greek, Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, Runic, Hindoo, Pali, Chinese, Syric and Tibetan, and he could write French with all the vigor and fluency of Duperron himself.

In 1783, Sir William was appointed judge of the Supreme Court of Bengal; and directly after arriving in Calcutta, founded the Asiatic Society, thereby enlisting many oriental scholars in Europe to engage in a critical study of the laws, the customs, the language and the religion of India. To their amazement, they found a sacred literature, vast and exhaustless, from every point of view. Thenceforward the study and search of Hindu literature began; and the end is not yet.

To their further amazement, they found from these old records, running back 3000 to 4000 years B. C., that India was peopled by a race with strong religious instincts, and with mental endowments as keen as their numerous progeny, who left their early homes in India and settled in Europe.

THE ARYANS.

Diligent research, within the last one hundred years, has reasonably well established the fact, that, more than 5000 years ago, the Aryans, then undivided, were occupy-

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but translations had previously been made by Dara Shuka and others as early as 1657. Europe, however, turned a deaf ear upon all of these, and it was not until Sir William Jones was sent as a judge to Bengal, that a warm interest was awakened in the religion and history of the East.

ing that large territory stretching east from Bactra, and reaching beyond the Indus.

When that populous hive swarmed, there went forth the Persians, the Kelts, the Greeks, the Teutons, the Latins and the Slavi. Those people, whom we now call Hindoos, our ancestors, many generations back, remained at the old homestead. They were then blue of eye, with straight hair and fair of skin; but many generations passed under the hot sun of the Ganges, has left them almost as brown and dark as our American Indians.[9]

But those Hindoos of whom we have been speaking were not the first or original inhabitants of India. When the Aryans entered Punjab, they found a dark-skinned race already in possession of the soil. And they made war upon those men of color, and pressed them back. The American people, for now nearly three hundred years, have done the same with the aboriginal tribes found on this continent. The Jews some 3400 years ago, slaughtered right and left, without mercy, to obtain possession of the Holy Land. As if a land can or could be holy, where people are murdered for its possession.

In India the victorious Aryans reduced those dark-visaged people (Varna or colored) to serfdom. They called them Dasas or Dasyus; and, later on, when the Brahmans divided society into four great casts, or divisions, these Varna (colored) men, were called Sudras, and were placed at the very lowest round of the ladder.

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[9] When Columbus first saw the natives of Cat Island, he supposed he had touched the shores of India, and hence called the natives Indians.

THE SUDRAS.

§ 4. But the Sudras themselves had been trespassers and pillagers. For back of them, and beneath them in vigor and intelligence, there once lived in India, in the long ago, a race whom those Sudras, or at least their ancestors, had dispossessed. Just when the predecessors of the Sudras were conquered and driven to the hills, or slaughtered, it is now impossible to tell. It may have been ten thousand years ago; and possibly even beyond that period; and again it may have been much less. One thing is certain, it was centuries before the Hebrews leveled the walls of Jericho by the tooting of rams' horns. That Jericho affair, if the chronology of the Hebrew Bible be correct, was only about 1450 years B. C. And at that time India and Egypt were the two focuses of intelligence and civilization. The hymns of the Rig-veda had been sung for centuries in India, and Osiris, the God of the Egyptians, was holding his court for the trial of souls, as far back, at least, as 2300 years B. C. Whence came those Sudras, whom the Hindoos conquered? But a more difficult and puzzling question lies back beyond that: Whence came those Aborigines, whom those Sudras dispossessed? The traces of those primitive people, who left their stone axes and their flint arrow-heads, are unmistakable evidences that a primitive race of men were once in possession of India, as the flint arrow-heads and stone axes are proof (even had we no better evidence) that a savage race once held sway in Britain.

A WORLD STRIFE.

The Hindoos held India fast in their grip for more

than four thousand years; but England now has her grip on them, and it will be only because of the vast multitudes of Hindu people that they will be saved from the fate of the Sudras. But even their vast numbers may not save them. Physical force has ever ruled the world, from the lowest to the highest forms of life. It is always the survival of the strongest. For the disappearance of the weaker race is still going on, in every part of the earth.

"The lizard feeds on the ant, and the snake feeds on the lizard; the rapacious kite on both. The fish-hawk robs the fish-tiger of that which it had seized. The shrike chases the bubul, which did chase the jeweled butterflies; till everywhere each slays, a slayer, and, in turn, is slain. Life living upon death. Thus this fair show veils one vast, savage, grim conspiracy, of sickening murder, from the worm to man, who himself kills his brother."[10]

But notwithstanding the ferocity in man's nature, and his disposition to be a marauder and a plunderer, he has always, as far back as we can trace him, been a worshipper of gods and goddesses, big and little, high and lofty, as well as low and groveling.

Nations are only aggregations of individuals, and they plunder and rob, on gigantic scales. Look at Russia plundering China; see the butcheries of England in South Africa. Why is America slaughtering the people in the Philippine Islands? Why did France murder the Sulus; and why is Germany, with shotted cannon, seeking pos-

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[10] Arnold's Light of Asia—book first.

sessions in every place where she finds a people too weak to withstand her? These lists might be greatly extended. When nations murder, it is called war. Diplomacy is only another name for swindling on a huge scale. All these nations just mentioned are called Christian nations, and claim to follow the precepts of the Man of Galilee.

INDIAN HISTORY IS MEAGER.

§ 5. India, which is as large as all of Europe, Russia alone excluded, never heard of Jesus, or, at least, never claimed to follow his religion; yet India, for the last four-thousand years, has made no wars of conquest; and Brahmanism and Buddhism have been her religions during all those centuries. It is true that Alexander the Great, about three hundred and twenty-five years B. C., invaded India, and those people defended themselves the best they could; but that was not a war of their own seeking.

India has no history of great wars and great conquests. Her chronology is provokingly, and lamentably deficient. But we catch glimpses of her people, here and there, from the Brahmanas, the Mantras, and the Upanishads. For forty centuries past, they have been an intensely religious race; worshiping those great visible objects of nature, that call forth the glowing admiration of every devout soul. Like all other peoples, their primitive worship was rude and uncouth, and consisted largely in offering sacrifices to the sun, the moon, the stars, the clouds, the waters and the winds. But they did not sacrifice unto devils, as did the Jews, mentioned in chapter 32 of Deuteronomy.

There are to-day more than two hundred and forty

millions of people in India, and for more than three thousand five hundred years that country has been a populous hive. Why is it that, in all this lapse of centuries, it has cut so small a figure in the world's changing history? Her people were and are intellectual; they are moral,[11] they are industrious.

What then is the reason that they have never taken a position in the world commensurate to their abilities and their population? The answer is not far to be sought, and is easily given: Religion and philosophy have fully occupied the Indian mind. Moreover, they lack, and have ever lacked, that organ called combativeness: They are not, and never have been, a quarrelsome and fighting race. True, there are traces, in the Veda, of internal dissensions; but they were never covetous of the lands and wealth of neighboring nations. The great mystery of creation and man's existence on earth was of more importance to them than armies and empires. Their religion, for generations, has taught them that it is sinful to take life; even the life of a worm. The Brahmans taught this long before Buddha was born; and Buddha's religion was even more tolerant and peaceful.

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[11] I know it is claimed that they worship Juggernaut, and do many other lawful things—but let the reader wait a bit and see further along about that.

CHAPTER II.

BRAHMANISM AND THE MOSAIC RELIGION FURTHER COMPARED.

§ 1. Brahmanism precedes Buddhism by so many centuries that it is well to glance back at it, for it is venerable with age. Its dogmas are numerous and are written in many books. In fact, the sacred literature of India is eight times greater in extent that the Hebrew Bible.

Who founded this vast religious system, no one can tell. It is evident that it grew by accretions, from age to age, for no one person in a long life could build an edifice so imposing. But that its foundations were laid in the dim and misty past is beyond all controversy. If we wish to fix a date for it, we are surely safe in saying that when Abraham was sitting in his tent door, on the plains of Mamre, about thirty-eight hundred years ago,[1] the hymns of the Rig-Veda had been sung for centuries on the banks of the Indus, and probably in the groves along the Ganges. How long the Hindu Bible had then been in process of composition will probably never be known. It is a book of books; and like our own Bible, was composed by different persons living centuries apart. Like the Hebrew inspired (?) seers, the Hindu inspired (?)

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1 Genesis, Chapter 18.

seers sometimes involved themselves in contradictions. Yet the Jews in composing their Bible had somewhat the advantage, for they were fewer in numbers, and occupied only a small skirt of territory along the eastern end of the Mediterranean. But India is vast, and her people for forty or fifty centuries have been numerous. We may, therefore, conclude that more hands held the tiller of the Hindu craft than the Jewish bark; hence more liability to confusions and discrepancies and contradictions. Moreover, we must not be too critical in this matter. Are we sure that our own house is not made of glass? For in my own America those who follow the Man of Galilee as the founder of their faith must not forget that there are here conflicting creeds and beliefs in very sharp antagonism.

OUR CHURCHES QUARREL.

To illustrate: The Presbyterians have quarreled among themselves, and with every other sect for four hundred years over the question of infant damnation, and still do not agree. As if the Almighty had nothing else to do but roast babies in furnaces of fire because *He* had not *elected* them to go to Glory. If this infernal doctrine were found in the Hindu Bible, we would lift up our hands in holy horror. But as it is a supposed Christian doctrine, we endure it; and some mental deformities profess, in their sterner moods, to even believe it.

The Roman Catholic church is as inimical to the so-called orthodox churches to-day as Brahmanism was to Buddhism, when the latter was driven forth after centuries of struggle. And the orthodox churches [2] would,

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[2] The so-called orthodox churches are the Methodists,

if they could, at once and forever wipe out and abolish Catholicism.

Many harsh things have been most unjustly charged against the people of India. It has been said that "nowhere in the world are luxury and licentiousness carried so far."[3] That is too sweeping. It is no more true than it would be to make the same charge against the people of France, or England, or against the people of my own country. In India there are, especially in great cities, black spots where lust, lewdness and debauchery prevail. The same may be said of London, Paris, New York and Chicago. As to luxury, the rich, and especially the extravagantly rich, everywhere loll supinely and roll along voluptuously. It is the same old story here and in India as well. The rich man "is clothed in purple and fine linen, and fares sumptuously every day."[4]

§ 2. While it is true that there is a class of ultra ascetics in India who hold that the body is the great enemy to spiritual progress, and therefore macerate and mutilate it and cause it to suffer in many ways; yet the masses of the people there are struggling to extract enough from the soil to feed and nourish the bodies of all.

INDIAN ASCETICISM.

There are more than two hundred and fifty millions of

Baptists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, etc. But I do not allege that the Roman Catholics are not good people.

[3] I allude to J. F. Clark's Ten Great Religions: title, Brahmanism. § 2.

[4] Luke, 16th chapter, verse 19.

people in India,[5] and of this vast number forty millions or more are engaged in agriculture alone. In all great populations there will be found some who are mentally deformed. They are possessed with hallucinations and delusions. The fakirs of India were of this class; their asceticism being so extreme and nonsensical that some of them ate their food naked; some wore their hair matted; some shaved their heads and faces; others slashed their bodies with knives; while some bored holes in their tongues, or plucked out an eye. Possibly his eye had offended him, and if so, Jesus copied him; for he said, "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee."[6] Some wandered through mountains and slept, like beasts, in gloomy caverns. Others scattered ashes on their heads, or fasted until their bodies became withered and wasted.

Moses, it is said, fasted forty days without even water to drink. (Exodus 34.) Jesus also fasted forty days (Matt. 4 and Luke 4), and John the Baptist was something of an asectic himself, for he lived "in the wilderness upon locusts and wild honey."[7]

Those Brahman ascetics lived in the woods and caves that they might escape the miseries of metempsychosis (transmigration) and finally reach the joys of Nirvana (heaven.) Moses, John the Baptist and Jesus were simply copying them. Why did John the Baptist preach and teach in the wilderness, subsisting meanwhile on

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[5] Of the two hundred and fifty millions, there are forty millions of Mohammedans.

[6] Matt. V, 29.

[7] The best attested case of fasting is that of Dr. Tan-

locusts and wild honey, unless to make sure that he might reach the eternal camping-ground in safety?

THE RIG-VEDA.

§ 3. The Rig-Veda, the divine revelation to the Hindus stands to Brahmanism about the same as the Pentateuch does to the subsequent parts of our Hebrew Bible. One difference being that the Pentateuch says that God talked to Moses,[8] while the divine revelation to the Hindus is expressed by the word Sruti, "heard" or hearing. Another difference between these two old Bibles is as to their respective ages. The transactions in Exodus, if its chronology be correct, took place about 1491 years B. C. The oldest hymns of the Rig-Veda date back 2400 years B. C.[9] And prose always precedes poetry in the history of our race.

We know that the separation of the Aryan Persians from the Hindu Aryans took place more than 4300 years ago. They were down there in the Punjab, or on the

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ner of Chicago. He insisted that it was possible that Jesus fasted forty days. Tanner tried it. He had watchers and guards, and the doctors took his weight, temperature and pulse every day. At the end of forty days he was very weak and ready to collapse. The angels did *not* come and minister to him as they did to Jesus (Mat. 4, 11.) But a man gave Tanner a piece of watermelon the moment the forty days had expired, which revived him at once.

[8] Exodus, chapter 33, where this amazing statement is made,—but the Lord would only let Moses see His "back parts." Read the whole chapter to the last verse.

[9] In this matter I follow Dr. Martin Haug. He thinks the oldest of the Vedic hymns were composed 2400

Jumna, at about the time Noah was in his ark, some forty-three hundred years ago. They were then composing their Bible—the Rig-Veda. The flood did not reach them.

While there is much wonderfully beautiful prose in Genesis, there is not a single line of poetry. And it was not until that marvelous (?) passage of the Red Sea that Miriam and the women went out with timbrels and songs to celebrate that extraordinary event (Exodus, 15) that we discover any poetry.

Vedic poetry was surely sung as far east as the Ganges at least five hundred years before Miriam's day, and in the Punjab much earlier. The Hindu Bible and the Hebrew Bible both claim to have come to man by inspiration from God; and both Bibles teach that the favor of heaven may be obtained by giving the Gods a meal of victuals. But Leviticus tells us that no man who had a flat nose, or was hunch-backed, or a dwarf, could offer God his dinner.[10].

Both Bibles speak of "the God of Gods, and the Lord of Lords." (Psalms, 136.)

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years B. C. If this be true, it may help to answer some puzzling questions as to the when-and-where of the human race. Respecting these dates, I am fully aware that Max Müller fixed the chanda period at about twelve hundred years B. C. But he was careful to say that most Sanskrit scholars would think his limit too short. Further careful investigation has found his limit is in fact too narrow. He limited the Sutra period to six hundred years B. C.; and the proof now is far back beyond that. (See Goldstücker's Manava-Kalfra Sutra, p. 78.)

[10] Leviticus, chapter 21, v. 8, 17 and 21, speaks of offering bread to God. Laws of Manu., 3, §§ 70 to 90.

SACRIFICES TO THE GODS.

The Hindus offered to their deities milk, butter, boiled rice, barley, rice cakes, etc., but they did not partake of the "food before the Gods had eaten." [11] The Hebrews did not treat their God with the same consideration; for as late as three hundred years after the exodus, when offering a sacrifice, the priest's servant, "with a three-pronged flesh-hook came, while the flesh was seething, and thrust the hook into the pot, and all he could fish up, the priest took for himself." [12] The priests had become even more ravenous than in the time of Moses, for Aaron and his sons only got "the remnant of the meat-offering." [13]

There is another parallel between the Hindoos and the Hebrews; for the Hebrew Bible mentions ten patriarchs, who each lived to a very great age before the flood; and the Hindoos have ten great sages who lived in the early dawn of history.[14]

FOUR GREAT CLASSES OR CASTS.

§ 4. With both the Hindoos and Hebrews, the priesthood greatly enlarged their borders. In this matter the Hindu priests went to the most extravagant lengths. They divided the people into four great casts or classes:

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[11] Satapatha-Brahmana, I Kanda, Vol. 12, S. B. E., p. 2. But see section 5, of this chapter, where bloody sacrifices were abolished.

[12] I Samuel, chapter 2. The word "Sacrifice" means, in such connection, a meal offered to the Deity.

[13] Leviticus, chapter 2, v. 3.

[14] Laws of Manu, chapter 1, Creation. I might mention that the Chinese also have a similar legend.

the Brahmanas, the Kshatriyas, the Vaisyas, and the dark-skinned Sudras. At the head of these four casts stood the privileged, lordly Brahman. For generations and for centuries he struggled to reach this alluring, dazzling summit. His leadership was gained, no doubt, in the first instance, by his intellectual superiority. He was keen, he was alert, he was devout; he placed himself in the van of the moving column, and the masses blindly followed him.

The Purohitas (family priests) devoted themselves with such assiduity that they were soon bold enough to say to the King: "Verily, the Gods do not eat the foods offered by the King, who is without a Purohita; wherefore let the King, who wishes to sacrifice, place a Brahmana at the head. The kingdom of such a ruler is undisturbed. He attains to the full measure of life. A wise Purohita is the guardian of his realm." (Aitareya-Brahman, 8.) In short, the Brahman priests, from the very first glimpses we get of them, were extremely pertinacious in their own behalf. They said: "The very birth of a Brahmana is an eternal incarnation of the sacred law, for he is born to fulfill that law and become one with Brahman.

"A Brahmana," they said, "is born the highest on earth; the lord of all created beings for the protection of the treasury of the law. Whatever exists in the world is the property of the Brahmana. On account of the excellence of his origin, the Brahmana is, indeed, entitled to it all. The Brahmana eats but his own food; wears but his own apparel; bestows but his own in alms; other mortals subsist through the benevolence of the Brahmana." It was incumbent on a Brahmana to study the sacred

laws and duly instruct his pupils in them.[15] "He who did this was never tainted by sins arising from thoughts, words or deeds."[16] Even the King was warned not to provoke a Brahmana to anger; for when angered they told him they could instantly destroy him and his whole army.

The next caste, in rank and importance to the Brahmanas, was the military order, the Kshatriya. There are indications that there was resistance by the Kshatriyas to the lofty and self-asserted supremacy of the Brahmans. But how long it continued, and when and whence it commenced, the records, so far as known, are silent. But that there was a clashing, at least in sentiment, it is not hard to believe. For how could a self-respecting man admit without a controversy, that "a Brahman boy of ten years and a Kshatriya of one hundred years stand to each other in the relation of father and son"; that between the two, the Brahman was the father.[17]

The laws of Manu declare it to be the duty of the Kshatriya to protect the people, offer sacrifies, study the Veda, and to abstain from sensual pleasures. But a Kshatriya, who came to the house of a Brahmana, was neither called a guest nor personal friend; yet the Brahmana might feed him after the Brahmana himself had

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[15] We shall see presently that none but a "twice-born man" was allowed to study the sacred law. The Sudras were forever excluded.

[16] Laws of Manu, chapter 1. The last three words in the above sentence sound supiciously, as if borrowed from Zoroaster.

[17] Chapter 2, Sloka, 135, Manu.

eaten. In fact there was a deep, wide, impassable gulf between the Brahmanas and the Kshatriyas—as impassable as that in slavery times between the master and the slave in my own country.

The next step in the descending scale was the Vaisya, whose duty it was to tend the cattle, trade, loan money and cultivate the land. He could also offer sacrifices and study the Veda. But the stricken Sudra found all doors shut and barred against him. He had, as we have already seen, driven a weaker race from the soil; and his own punishment was now at hand. The all-conquering Aryan had overcome him and reduced him to abject slavery. "Such measure as ye shall meet, it shall be measured to you again."

SLAVES IN INDIA.

The Brahmans, having mastered the Kshatriyas and the Vaisyas, found it easy to put into their laws that Svayambhu (The Self-Existent) had created the Sudra to be a slave. That even if his humane master released the Sudra from servitude, he was still a slave to a Brahmana, for that was innate in him.[18] And it was made the King's duty to compel the Vaisyas and the Sudras to perform the work prescribed for them, lest the whole world should fall into confusion. It is said that Svayambhu (The Divine Self-Existent), for the sake of the prosperity of the worlds, caused Brahmana to proceed from his mouth, the Kshatriya from his arms, the Vaisya from his thighs, the Sudra from his feet.[19]

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[18] Laws of Manu, chapter 8, §§ 413, 414 and 415, a slave could own no property.

[19] Manu, §§ 6 and 31. Those parts of the body above

THE SECOND OR SPIRITUAL BIRTH.

§ 5. Every Brahman must, between his eighth and sixteenth years, perform the sacrament of [20] Savitri (Initiation). Failing in this, he became an outcast, and was so despised by the Brahmanas that they would not countenance him, even in distress. The ceremony of initiation was a solemn, important religious event in the life of every Aryan. It so sanctified him that thereafter he was called a "twice-born man." He was admonished that the Veda was the source of the sacred, revealed law. That Sruti (revelation) and Smriti (tradition) *must not be called in question in any matter;* since on those two the sacred law was founded. That every twice-born man, who treats with contempt those two sources of the law, must be cast out as an atheist and a scorner of the Veda. But they never burned atheists, as did the Christians formerly.

The novice was instructed that in seeking knowledge of the divine law, the supreme authority was in revelation (Sruti.) After tonsure, he was invested with the sacred cord, which was generally worn over the left shoulder and under the right arm. He was then given a soft, smooth girdle of munga grass, and a staff, smooth and handsome; and further instructed that by the study

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the navel the Hindus said were pure; those below, impure. Manu, chapter 5, § 132.

[20] This period was extended for the Kshatriya to 22 years; to the Vaisya, to 24 years. Beyond that period any young man of the first three casts, who failed to perform the Savitri, became Vratya,—an outcast.

of the Veda, by vows, by purity, by burnt[21] oblations, by recitations of the sacred texts, by offerings to the Gods, to the Rishis and to the Manes, his body would become fit for Brahman.[22]

Jesus prescribed a different formula for sanctification. For he said to Nicodemus, "except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." (John 3, 5th.)

One of the things imposed upon the pious Brahman was to offer oblations, morning and evening; and the Jews, so Ezra tells us in chapter 3, "offered burnt offerings to the Lord morning and evening." The Jews were simply copying the sacrifices of the Hindoos. The priests

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[21] This matter of oblations at the period of the Veda, to win the favor of Heaven, was in vogue nearly all over the earth. It had traveled from the East. The Egyptians brought it with them when they migrated, and Moses learned it from them. Is it possible that the offering of sacrifices by Moses, in the wilderness, did, in fact, drive the swarms of flies from Egypt? (Exodus, chapter 8, 25 to 32.)

[22] This is a singular passage: If we say *the body*, by these austerities, becomes fit for union with Brahman, does it not look as if Jesus, who taught the resurrection of the body, found some support here for his doctrine? More than this: take section 27, chapter 2, Manu, where it says, "By honest oblations, and the tying on of the sacred girdle, the taint derived from both parents is removed from twice-born men." Is the taint there mentioned the same as

"In Adam's fall,
We sinned all."

If not, what is it?

of India offered burnt sacrifices to the New Moon, and the Jews copied them in this also.[23]

But no Sudra was allowed to offer a sacrifice. Nor was he even permitted to hear the sacred texts repeated. The Brahmana, on account of the superiority of his origin and his sanctification, legislated for all the people. The Jewish priests, likewise, gave law to all their people.

HUMAN SACRIFICES.

Far back in the misty past, the Hindus offered *human sacrifices.* Then they fell back from that and took a horse; then dropped lower and took an ox; and then a sheep; then a goat; and when the goat was offered up, the sacrificial essence went out of it and entered the earth. They dug for it and found rice and barley; and from these "they gained as much efficacy as in all the five-fold animal sacrifices." [24]

The Jews, a thousand years later, were still shedding blood to appease an angry God; and we are told that Solomon, at the dedication of the Temple, offered twenty-two thousand oxen and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep, as a sacrifice unto the Lord.[25]

I shall close this chapter by simply adding that the twice-born Hindoo was directed to always bless his food, and to rejoice with a pleasant face when he saw it, and to pray that he might ever obtain it.[26] Now if he was copied and followed, when Jesus broke bread and blessed

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[23] Bible, Book of Ezra, chapter 3, v. 5.
[24] Satapatha-Brahmana, p. 50, Vol. 12, S. B. E.
[25] I Kings, chapter 8, v 63.
[26] Manu, chapter 2, section 54. Mark 12, v. 34.

it, and is still copied by him who sits at his table and asks God to bless the food he is about to take, then let no man carp or sneer at either Jesus or the Hindoo. For the man who can devoutly thank Heaven for his daily bread must be of that class who are "the salt of the earth."

CHAPTER III.

SOME FURTHER PARALLELS: HINDOO AND HEBREW SCRIPTURES.

§ 1. There is, perhaps, no Bible of any faith, which is to-day the same as when it was first put forth. The Bible of the Hindoos is surely not the same that it was originally, for it has suffered recensions, eliminations and additions. The same may be said of the Jewish Bible; for it, likewise, has encountered recensions, eliminations and supplements. Bibles are not written in a day. It takes generations and centuries to construct one. It took nearly seventeen hundred years to complete the Jewish canon. The most ancient hymns of the Veda are probably forty-three hundred and possibly five thousand years old. The Hindu canon closed six or seven hundred years B. C.[1] It was, therefore, a long period in building.

In nearly the last words of Manu, he challenges and condemns all subsequent theologies, as follows: "All those doctrines differing from the Veda, which spring up, are worthless and false, because they are of modern date." (V Manu, 12, § 96.) John closed the Jewish

[1] It is possible that the Hindu canon closed eight or nine hundred years B. C. See Manu 12, § 96.

Bible in the year A. D. 96 (to 125) with these menacing words: "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this Book; and if any man shall take away from the words of this Book, God shall take away his part out of the Book of Life."[2]

Theologies are the inventions of man; and the inventors of theologies are always dogmatic. It was so with Moses and Manu. Moses was a man of blood and mercilessly slaughtered unbelievers. In one day he put three thousand Hebrews to the sword for worshipping Aaron's golden calf.[3] Manu was much less bloodthirsty. If a twice-born Hindu forsook the law, he became a despised outcast, and all intercourse with him was strictly forbidden. But he was not slain. By repentance and confession, by bathing and fasting, by austerities, and by penances, he became freed from his guilt.

Time has dealt severely with both of these old faiths. In Jerusalem to-day (1905) there are only about twenty thousand Jews; and these, mostly, pass the Mosaic records by to study the Talmud. The Jews seem to have deserved their hard fate. They are the scattered, unhonored[4] remnants of an unlovely but famous people. Yet

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[2] I think the record is wrong here. There was no New Testament canon until about A. D. 125 or later, and it is hard to tell just when the poor, ignorant Ebionites first approved it. It is possible that it was written as early as A. D. 100. St. John must have heard of Manu.

[3] Of course there are some few exceptions; but as a class, they are a despised race.

[4] Exodus, 32: v. 27 and 28.

their old records, curiously enough, are studied and held sacred by millions in Europe and America.

THE OLD MOSAIC RELIGION IS FADING.

But the old Mosaic religion is fading away. Of the fifteen or sixteen hundred millions of people on the globe, barely six million hold to that ancient Jewish superstition, and even these are so broken up in little isolated groups and patches, that their influence, on passing events, is scarcely a cipher. One foolish, senseless old custom, that of circumcision, which they probably learned from the Egyptians, they still follow with all the scrupulous care of Neophytes. Jeremiah told them [6] they were uncircumcised in *heart,* and the day should come when they would be punished by nations uncircumcised. It would seem as if Jeremiah's prophecy had been and is still being fulfilled. Very few Jews live in the country. They mostly cluster in Ghettos, in the filthiest parts of cities; and their children, with unkempt heads and dirty faces, throng the streets. Such are the descendants of "God's chosen people."

§ 2. Neither the Hindu Scriptures nor the faith of India have fared so badly as the Hebrews. But the Rig-Veda has not escaped the gnawing tooth of time.[7]

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[6] Jeremiah, chapter 9, v. 25 and 26.

[7] The word "Veda" means knowledge; "Sruti," revelation. Originally the Hindu Scriptures were divided into three Samhitas or collections, viz.: Rig-Veda, Yagur-Veda and Sama-Veda. Later the priests added another—the Atharvan or Ather-Veda. These were the compositions of Seers, Rishis or poets, and were committed to memory and recited to the people.

It is not in vogue as much as formerly, but has been largely supplanted by two great epics, the Ramayana and Mahbharata.

John Milton's Paradise Lost, if it had been written thirty-five hundred or four thousand years ago, is such a story of Gods that it might have gone into the Hindu Bible as a Sruti (revelation) from heaven; or into the Hebrew Bible as a "Thus saith the Lord." The Jews would have welcomed it gladly, because their valley of Hinnon is surpassed by it in heat and suffering. The Hindus, because it pictures heaven in vivid colors and gives it a better defined locality than the Rig-Veda. Besides it would have supplanted metempsychosis effectively.[8]

ALL EARLY RELIGIONS WERE BLOODY.

We have seen that the principal mode of worship by the Hindus and Hebrews was by bloody oblations offered to their Gods to appease their anger and to obtain their favor. Those people lived about three thousand miles distant from each other. And if it be true that the exodus took place only 1491 years B. C., it follows that the Hindus were sacrificing to their deities a thousand years and more before the time of Moses. When and where did they learn those heathenish rites? Did the priestly class, through long periods, invent and add to them, until now

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[8] It is not too much to affirm that Milton's great poem has sounded the key note to many a modern sermon, yet in the last fifty years hell has abated its rigors somewhat; and if Revelation had not been reinforced by Paradise Lost, religion would, no doubt, ere this have ceased wearing sables.

we find them elaborate enough to fill large volumes? Did the Egyptians, before they migrated from the far east, learn them there and carry them to the banks of the Nile, where Moses copied them?

The Egyptians were particular in forbidding the use of swine-flesh for food; and Moses copied them in this, exactly.[9] They also used fish which had fins and scales, and Moses told the Hebrews they might do the same. But he did not teach the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. Yet the Egyptians taught it, and had taught it nearly nine hundred years before the exodus. Nor did Moses teach the transmigration of the soul, which the Egyptians and the Hindoos both taught.[10]

§ 3. Moreover, where two nations or peoples teach identical doctrines of religion, in part or in full, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the younger nation borrowed from or imitated the elder one. But such a copy is never exactly true in all its details. It was so in this case. India, as we shall see, taught retribution in her transmigration.

Egypt taught that the transmigrating soul traveled a circuit, which it made every 2842[11] years; but that as long as the body was preserved from decay, the circuit

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[9] Leviticus XI. as to swine and fish.

[10] After much study of this matter, I am satisfied that the Egyptians were of Asiatic origin, and probably learned, either directly or otherwise, the doctrine of metempsychosis from the Hindoos. Many Egyptian words are sanskrit words, the ancient tongue of India. But even Sanskrit had a predecessor.

did not begin. Thus many of the lower forms of life were escaped. Hence embalming and the mummies.

Moses, "if learned in all the wisdom of Egypt," knew of these things, and he must have known that Egypt emphasized the doctrine of a future life; yet he maintains a studied silence about it. But there was, and is, one thing, be it said, to his immortal honor. He taught, if the record be true, that there is only one Almighty Being for man to worship. True, he offered sacrifices with much mummery and foolishness, but he sacrificed to only one God, the Father of us all. Whether this belief in one God was the heir-loom of his race, or whether he had thought out the problem by himself, or whether Ezra[12] and Nehemiah doctored up those old Jewish legends and records, after the exile, and thus made him a monumental hero; or whether an echo of the Rig-Veda, or Hindoo philosophy, had reached his ear, cannot, absolutely, be answered by any one. But we shall not go far astray if we write down Ezra as an extremist; and Moses being already a prominent figure in Jewish legends, was magnified by the facile pen of the scribe into the colossal figure which we find in the Pentateuch.

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[11] A Sothaic period was 1421 years, and in two such periods the soul was supposed to make its circuit.

[12] Ezra, one of the exiles to Babylon, was a *fierce, uncompromising* Jew who, on his return, compelled all those who had married Canaanite and Hittite wives to give them up, and sent the wives away with their children. Such a man is hardly trustworthy to transcribe a great and important record. He called himself a ready scribe. (Ezra, chapter 7, v. 6.)

AGE OF RIG-VEDA.

If the Rig-Veda was in process of composition twenty-four hundred years B. C., then it reaches back to within a few years of the flood. If so, the idea of one God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, was in the world, and had been here nearly nine hundred years before Moses appeared. But if twenty-four hundred be too ancient a date for the commencement of the Hindoo scriptures, and we lop off five hundred years, even then the idea of one God was in India five hundred years before the exodus.

The following Vedic hymn,[13] which I am about to quote, was composed and chanted in India probably one thousand years before the Jewish exile.

1. "In the beginning, the only born Lord of all that is, established the earth and the sky. Who is this God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

2. He who gives life and strength, whose shadow is immortality, whose shadow is death. Who is this God to whom we shall offer sacrifice?

3. He is the only King of the breathing world. He governs all, man and beast. He is the God to whom we offer sacrifice.

4. He whose power these snowy mountains, the seas and the distant rivers proclaim. He is the God to whom we offer sacrifice.

5. He through whom the heavens were established, nay, the highest heaven. He measures out the light. He is the God to whom we offer sacrifice.

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[13] Rig-Veda X: 121

6. He to whom the heavens and the earth, standing firm, by his will, tremblingly look up. He is the God to whom we offer sacrifice.

7. He who looked over the water-clouds which gave strength; He who is *above all Gods;* may He not destroy us, the Creator of the earth, the Righteous, who created heaven and the mighty waters? He is the God to whom we offer sacrifices."

§ 4. But neither the Hindoos nor the Hebrews were satisfied with one God; and they were continually wandering off after strange ones.[14] The Hindoos invented Indra and Agni, and Varuna and others, to whom they addressed their supplications. Varuna, being the Lord of Punishment, bound the sinner with ropes.[15] They begged mercy of him, as follows:

"Let me not yet, O! Varuna, enter into the house of clay.
Have mercy, Almighty, have mercy!
I go along trembling like a cloud driven by the wind.
Have mercy, Almighty, have mercy!
Through want of strength, Thou strong, bright God, have I gone to the wrong shore.
Have mercy, Almighty, have mercy!
Thirst came upon me when I stood in the midst of the waters.
Have mercy, Almighty, have mercy!
Whenever we, O Lord, commit an offence before Thy heavenly throne;

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[14] Zachariah, 587 B. C., strove to cut even the names of the idols out of the land (Zach. XIII, 2), and Malachi threatened the wicked with fire. (Mal. IV, 2.) And Micah said, "The Jews lie in wait for blood; even the judges want rewards." (Micah 7.)

[15] Manu IX, 308.

Whenever we violate Thy holy law, carelessly.
Have mercy, Lord, have mercy!

Such was the prayer of a Hindoo three thousand years ago. It sounds like a Psalm of David.

"O, Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger; neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure. Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak. O Lord, heal me, for my bones are vexed." [16]

Now, notwithstanding the fact that Moses labored so long and diligently to establish the faith of his people in one God only, yet the Christians, fifteen hundred years later, as we have seen, brought forth two new Gods, one of whom was, and is, a myth; the other a gentle, kindly-natured man. The Jews therefore when they nailed him on the cross were simply following the teachings of Moses, because they disbelieved in more than one God.

Moses said, "Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is *one Lord";* [17] and Mark tells us that when a Scribe asked Jesus which was the first commandment of all, he replied, "The first of all commandments is, 'Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is one Lord.' " [18]

It would seem, therefore, that Moses and Jesus were Unitarians; and with such sponsors for a creed, it ought to win the world to its side.

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[16] Psalm 6.
[17] Deut., VI, 4.
[18] Mark XII, 29.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GENESIS OF THE HINDU AND HEBREW BIBLES.

§ 1. Old, mystical legends, about the origin of the world, which in process of time have become embodied in old records, have always held man, in every part of our globe, as if in a vice, and demanded that he shall, without question, believe whatever is written.

The Hindus were as peremptory, dogmatic and supercilious as the Hebrews. But they ventured beyond the Jews, for, being more given to theorizing and philosophizing, they invented a scheme, or system of creation, as foolish, mystifying and improbable as the dogmatism of Genesis.

The laws of Manu set forth that the universe existed in the shape of darkness; that the Divine Self-Existent appeared, dispelling the gloom; and with a thought, created the waters and placed his seed therein. That the seed became a golden egg, equal in brilliancy to the sun;[1] and in that egg Brahma himself was born; the progenitor of the world. He resided in that egg one whole year; and then, by thought, divided it into two halves;[2] from

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[1] That is, equal in purity to the sun.

[2] What an inconsistency is here! It is so utterly nonsensical and foolish, that it is on a parallel with a fairy

which he formed the heavens and the earth. He then "drew forth from himself" manas (the mind), which, it is said, is both real and unreal. From the mind he "drew forth egoism," which is self-consciousness; then the Great One (the soul), and the five organs of sensation. Manu tells us that Brahma can only be perceived by the "internal organ." This "internal organ must be the mind or soul; for with no one, nor all, of the five senses combined, can man perceive Brahma (God). A horse has the same number of organs of sénsation as man; but has it that "internal organ?" On the other hand, can it be proven that it has not manas also?

THE FIVE SENSES—WILL THEY SURVIVE?

I look out of my window and see the roses. I smell their sweet fragrance. I hear the mocking-birds singing in the trees. I feel the balmy air. I take up a rose and chew its leaves; and yet all of these five senses will be nailed in my coffin. Will manas, or egoism, survive? Hindoo philosophy answers that it will.

Moses, on this all-important question, uttered no word. Genesis also is silent. The "it" in Manu is the "internal

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tale. If Atman or Brahma was already an existent being, why did he crawl into an egg to be born? Think of the Creator of this world hived in an egg! The only reason I can give is that Hindoo philosophers, afterwards, when trying to explain the origin of things, reached the conclusion that of all living things, there are three origins only: That which springs from an egg; that which comes from a living being, and that from a germ. Manu, chapter 1; also Upanishads, Vol. 1, part 1, S. B. E., p. 94.

organ." Is "it" Egoism? And, if so, is Egoism something surpassing even the mind in excellency? Manu says that Egoism is something Lordly;[3] and if it be drawn from the mind, what else can it be than the sublimated essence thereof? I shall not follow the subtilities of Hindoo philosophy further, but merely add that if the mind is in fact drawn forth from Brahma (God), we may here find the reason that, being finally released from metempsychosis, it becomes merged in, or goes back to Brahma.

If this be wrong, and Egoism be greater than manas, it may be that it is Egoism that is merged. Is not this Hindoo doctrine the same as that taught in chapter twelve, Ecclesiastes, where we are told that the Spirit returns to God, who gave it? If Egoism or Manas be the same as Spirit, then Solomon and Manu here travel the same road.

By joining minute particles of himself with the five organs of sensation, and the mind, Brahma, we are told, created all beings; and "in the beginning" assigned their several names and conditions. Whatever quality, or course of action, the Lord first gave to man, plant, or brute; whether virtue or vice, truth or deceit, ferocity or falsehood, each clung to its kind, plant or animal, just as each season, of its own accord, assumes its distinctive marks.[4]

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[3] Manu I, 14. Some Hindoo philosophers maintain that the soul was drawn forth from Brahma before the mind, and that Egoism is simply the Ego or I.

[4] If Ezra edited the Pentateuch, then Manu precedes

THE CREATION—TIME?

§ 2. The Hebrew Bible says, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."

In the beginning of what? If it means in the beginning of the world He created it, then it is tantamount to saying that He created it—when He created it. Of course this would spoil the beautiful rhythm of the sentence. But if it means that he created the world only six thousand years ago, it is very evident that the writer had never studied geology or astronomy. For the "testimony of the rocks" makes the earth millions upon millions of years old. Its age is, in fact, so great that a puny six thousand years is as a mole-hill to a mountain.

If the Almighty Father is from everlasting to everlasting, then a thousand millions of years, and ten thousand times that, is only as a single grain of sand upon the shores of myriads and myriads of oceans. *Time never had a beginning, and God did not create time.* It was, and is, coeval with Him. It was, and is, without a beginning. Time was in this mighty universe of numberless worlds and suns when God was. It had no beginning; it will have no ending. The angel may stand with one foot upon the earth and the other upon the sea, and "cry with a loud voice, that time shall be no more," but time will not heed the angel. (Rev. X). Innumerable suns will continue to shine, and worlds without number will continue to revolve in spite of the angel.

Ezra; but Manu, as we now have it, is a reduction of an older work. Its present form is from 900 to 1300 years B. C. See Manu, chapter 1, sections 1 to 30.

Astronomy is also against Genesis, with its six thousand years for the earth's creation. The eccentricity of the earth's orbit has been calculated back to one million years before Jesus' day, and while it is true that the shape of its orbit has varied somewhat, yet its mean distance from the sun is so unvarying and constant, that it has not changed eight seconds in six thousand years.[5]

Is it not about as absurd to insist that our earth is a youngster, because Moses or Ezra, or some old Jewish writer, of whom we know nothing, so wrote it down in ignorance of the facts, as for some India writer to say that Brahma housed himself a whole year in an egg?

Both of these old Bibles are full of absurdities, inaccuracies and savagery. Both of them upheld slavery. Moses told the Hebrews to buy their bond-men of the heathen round about them, and the Indians, as we have observed, reduced the Sudras to slavery. In fact, India had several classes of slaves.[6] Those Bibles were both written in an age of idolatry and ignorance, when people believed the earth to be flat. They were written when polygamy was dominant, and both Bibles upheld it. In this matter Solomon stands pre-eminent with his seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines.[7]

Moses said, "Life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth,

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[5] Dr. James Croll's great work on climate and time. R. A. Proctor's article, Astronomy—Br. Ency., Vol. 2, p. 795.

[6] Leviticus XXV: 44. Manu 8: 413 to 417. The bond-man bought of the heathen could never regain his freedom. Neither could the Sudra.

[7] I Kings, XI, 3. I do not wonder that so many wives "turned away his heart."

hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, stripe for stripe." [8]

Manu said, "Whatever limb of a Sudra does hurt to a man of three higher casts, even that limb shall be cut off."[9] And if a Sudra struck a Brahma, he was to remain in hell one thousand years, but a twice-born man might expiate his offense by supplications, fasting and penances.

KNOWLEDGE AND THE SERPENT.

In chapter 2, Genesis, man is forbidden, under an awful penalty, to eat of the tree of knowledge. But without knowledge he would be as the beast of the field. Without knowledge he would probably build a house no better than the beaver. Now if the eating of the forbidden fruit of that tree in Eden has given us the mastery of nature, as we have it to-day, through the gate of knowledge, thereby opened to us, then, instead of vituperation and abuse, let the serpent which beguiled Eve have a monument, and a lofty one.

As to this serpent dialogue with Eve (chapter 3), it has heretofore been painted in colors immensely to the disadvantage of the beguiler. Yet that serpent told the truth, which God Himself immediately confirmed. For the serpent said, "God doth know that in the day ye shall eat of the forbidden fruit, your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil" (V. 5, chapter 3). Soon thereafter, the Lord was *walking* [10]

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[8] Exodus XXI: 22 to 27.
[9] Manu 8: 279 and 280, and Manu XI: 207.
[10] He must therefore have legs, or He could not walk.

in the Garden, "in the cool of the day." (The sun having just been created, it blazed up probably too hot in the middle of the day) and He questioned Adam about this matter. Adam told the truth, like a man, and said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." The Lord thereupon faced the woman: "What hast thou done?" The woman (bless her) did not flinch. "The serpent beguiled me," she said, "and I did eat." (Chapter 3, v. 13). Thereupon the Lord turned upon the serpent with these bitter words: "Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field. Upon thy belly thou shalt go; dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." The serpent kept his temper and made no reply; and if that serpent was in fact a snake, he still crawls on his belly. But was he not on his belly *before* he met Eve? Did he have legs before God cursed him? How is this? Who created that serpent? If this whole thing be not a finely drawn allegory, we may well ask, as God created every creeping thing, did He not also create that serpent? If God did not create it, who did? The serpent surely did not create itself.

Zoroaster, the great Iranian, taught that there were two great creative beings: Ormazd and Aharman (God and the Devil), who created and counter-created good spirits and bad. And that this world is one great battlefield, where the conflict will rage until Aharman, the God of sin, is overthrown and destroyed forever.

THAT SERPENT COULD TALK.

Here in this Eden story the Lord uses language that is entirely personal. The *serpent could talk also,* for he

held a conversation with Eve. Was this serpent Zoroaster's Aharman; or are these chapters the inventions of a romancer? However that may be, the Lord and the serpent agree as to the effect of eating the forbidden fruit. The serpent said their eyes would be opened, and they would be as Gods, knowing good and evil; and after they ate the fruit the Lord said, "Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." "Now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever, I will send him forth from Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken."[11]

The imagination of the poet is not always logical. Adam is trusted with the tree of Life, and that tree is in Eden (ch. 2, v. 9), and it was *not* forbidden to Adam, for the Lord expressly said: "Of every tree of the Garden thou mayest freely eat" (ch. 3, v. 16), except the tree of knowledge. Suppose Adam had eaten first of the tree of Life, would man's body have lived forever? Or would it have worn out and withered and died as it does now? It would look as if the solid facts are against the romancer.

§ 5. Another little lapse of the poet in chapter 4 is deserving of notice. When Cain for his crime was driven forth to wander as a fugitive and a vagabond over the earth, the Lord set a mark upon him lest any one finding him might slay him. "And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.[12]

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[11] Gen., chapter 3, verses 22 and 23.
[12] Chapter 4, v. 16.

THE NODITES.

Now, at that time there were of the human family, according to the record, only Adam, Eve and Cain in existence. Yet Cain settles in the land of *Nod;* finds that land *peopled;* falls in love with one of the young women, marries her, raises a family of children, and builds a city, which he names after his son Enoch. How did those Nodites get on this earth? There was no Garden of Eden for them; no tree of life or tree of knowledge for them. How did they get here? No dominion over all the earth is vouchsafed to the Nodites. Yet they did a good thing for the world, for they were not under the general curse meted out to Adam.

There is no record against the Nodites for disloyalty or disobedience; and it is probable that Seth, Adam's other son, married a Nodite girl. He certainly would do that in preference to marrying his sister. Besides, as Cain had so prospered with the Nodites as to get a wife and build a city, would it not be an inducement to Seth to try his fortune there also?

CHAPTER V.

TWO FLOODS AND THE TRUE ARK STORY.

§ 1. No one can write a book and hope to escape criticism. The book of Genesis, and in fact the whole Pentateuch, has been assailed by many persons and for different reasons. But Pentateuch will stand, and it ought to stand, not because it is historically correct in all its details, but because it gives us the best conception the Hebrew mind had of our Creator and of the creation of the world.[1] If that work were to be written to-day, he would be a rash and careless historian who would assert that the heavens and the earth and all animate and inanimate things were created in six days. He would study evolution [2] somewhat, and see what that tells him. He would investigate the solar system, including the nebular hypothesis, and instead of making this little earth of ours the great central wonder of the skies, with

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[1] The Book as we now have it, is only about 2,485 years old. Some of the material which Ezra wrought into his redaction, reaches centuries beyond that period; how many redactions it had suffered before it reached him it is impossible to tell.

[2] While I cannot believe that God hustled to get through creating "in just *six* days," I maintain that he is as much the *creator* when he sets the revolution ma-

the sun a small affair whose sole purpose it is to give us light, his mental vision would become enlarged enough to detail the facts as we now know them to be. He would tell us that the earth gets only a two-millionth part of the light given off by the sun. And it is not probable that Manu would write into the Hindu Bible that Brahma, their God, whose day is twelve millions of years and his nights of the same length, slumbers a day and a night, and at the end of that period awakes and begins the work of creating.[3]

These Bibles agree that darkness was here before light. Genesis says: "The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep." Manu tells us that it "existed in the shape of darkness, unknowable, immersed, as it were, in deep sleep, and that the Self-Existent One appeared, dispelling the darkness."[4] That He thereupon created ten great Lords of created beings, and "these created seven other classes of Gods, of measureless power."

A FISH THAT TALKS.

§ 2. Both the Hindoos and the Hebrews in their Holy Books, make mention of a great destroying flood. One

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chinery to going, which brought forth this world and its inhabitants as if he had created it as set forth in Genesis.

[3] If Ezra had consulted Manu as to his days of creation and lengthened them into Kalpas, of millions of years, his poetry might not have been as entrancing, but he would have been much nearer the truth.

[4] Manu I, 5 and 6. Some scholars maintain that the word "darkness" here is equivalent to Avidya (ignorance).

morning when Manu [5] was washing himself a fish came into his hands, and like Balaam's ass, and the serpent in Eden, it possessed the power of speech. It said to Manu: "A flood will come and carry all the people away. Rear me and I will save thee from that." "How shall I rear thee?" asked Manu. The fish replied: "I am a small fish; the large ones devour the small ones. Keep me in a tub and when I outgrow that put me in a pond; when too large for the pond take me down to the sea. That year the flood will come. Prepare a ship and I will save thee from the flood." The fish soon became a large one and was put into the sea. Meanwhile Manu built a ship and the flood came and floated him and his craft. The fish swam up to the boat, whereupon Manu "threw a rope over its horn." Then it swam to a lofty mountain and told Manu to fasten to a tree there, until the waters subsided, and that he could then descend gradually and be safe.[6] All the other people were washed away. And there is yet a legend of the tying of Manu's ship on the summit of the Himalayas.

THE HINDU EVE.

Manu was now alone in the world and he desired off-

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[5] Satapatha, Brahmana, Vol. 12, S. B. E., p. 216. This Manu is not the Creator, but the Father of mankind.

I am aware that it is claimed that Manu's fish story is copied from the Noah affair. Now, if that be true, then the Hebrews here pay back a small portion of their debt to the Hindus.

[6] This silly legend, first told, perhaps, as a camp story 4,000 or 5,000 years ago, may be the antecedent or progenitor of Noah's deluge. His craft rested on a mountain and so did Manu's.

spring. We are told that he offered sacrifices of clarified butter, some milk and curds, and in a year a woman rose from the sacrifices [7] and came to him. "Who art thou?" said he. "I am thy blessing, thy benediction. Whatever thou shalt invoke through me all shall be granted to thee." This woman became his bride and the mother of the Seers of the Veda.

Noah's flood differs somewhat from that of Manu, for instead of a fish the Lord himself warns Noah to build a boat and gives him the dimensions to build it. The Lord is sorry he made man, for "the earth was filled with violence;" [8] and He proposes to drown all flesh. According to the record, Noah was the only man upon the earth who "found grace in the eyes of the Lord." Ch. 6, v. 8.

It would seem to be a tremendous undertaking, even in these days of rapid transit, to gather a variety of all the beasts and birds upon the whole earth and house them in a boat like the Ark. But the Lord was gracious unto Noah, for he said to him that, "of fowls after their kind, and of cattle of their kind, and of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, *two* of every sort *shall come unto thee* to keep them alive." [9]

Directly after this the Lord changed his mind and

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[7] A cautious writer might ask where his milk and butter came from, for in such a flood the cattle must have perished.

[8] Gen. ch. v, 7 and 8. As I gave ample reasons in my introductory chapter on Zoroaster and the Persian religion, and compared it with the Persian flood, I refer the reader to section 5 of that chapter.

[9] Genesis 6. Read the whole chapter.

gave Noah a different bill of lading. For he told him to take of every clean beast by sevens, male and female, and of beasts not clean[10] by two, male and female. The fowls of the air he should take by sevens.

THE ARK.

Let us first notice the Ark. It is a large, clumsy-looking thing, about four hundred and fifty feet long, by seventy-five feet wide, three stories, and one door for each story, with only one window above, or on the top, extending up one cubit.[11] It has rooms, but the number is not known, neither can any one tell us what Gopher wood is, the material of the Ark. Nor can we tell whether it was nailed or spiked, or how it was fastened together.

We are told that Jubal-Cain was an artificer in brass and iron, and perhaps the art had not been lost.[12] Possibly there may have been a hardware store close by, and if Noah had the cash or good credit, that point was easily passed. Noah, at that time, was a veteran in years, for if chapter 5, Genesis, be true, he was five hundred years old. But in chapter 6 it is there declared that man's days "shall be an hundred and twenty years," yet Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth (Gen. 7, v. 6). And he lived after the flood ? three hundred and fifty years.[13]

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[10] All beasts that parted the hoof and were cloven-footed and chewed the cud, except the camel, were clean. Lev. xi.

[11] Gen. 6:16. There is no mention of glass for that window, although in Egypt glass was in use 2,400 years B. C.

[12] Gen. ch. 4, v. 22.

[13] Gen. 9, v. 29. It would seem that the Lord had changed his opinion about the length of man's days.

§ 3. How long this curious craft was in building, the record is silent, and any opinion is mere conjecture. Some say one hundred years and some even longer. If either of those guesses be correct, Noah was certainly a man of faith, courage and perseverance. Neither can any human being tell the spot where this world-famous Ark was constructed. It seems apparent, however, that if it took Noah one hundred years to build it, the frame, unprotected from the weather, would have become somewhat rotten and worm-eaten before the flood came. Nor can we conjecture where he got grain and forage for this immense carivansary that was to be housed in that craft. We are also at a loss to know how Noah himself fared during this long imprisonment. Did he eat cold victuals all these weary months? There was no chimney in the Ark. It was a dark stinking place filled with birds, reptiles and beasts. He had no fire and no light. How did he live?

Those who believe the record which we are investigating to be holy and God-given, will tell us that the Lord provided all that. But the record does not say that it is Holy, neither does it tell us that the Lord furnished the food.

The carnivora required fresh meat every day, and the waters prevailed one hundred and fifty days, and did not commence to recede until the high hills and the lofty mountains were covered with more than twenty feet of water and all flesh had perished. Then it required one hundred and fifty days more before the waters were abated, and they "decreased continually until the tenth

month, when the tops of the mountains were seen."[14] The flesh-eaters (and there was an army of them), would instinctively refuse salted food. How then were they sustained for nearly a year? There were not enough of the clean beasts in the ark to feed them, if we leave any to procreate the species. Just how this difficulty was bridged over I cannot tell, possibly the Lord closed the mouths of the lions and other ravenous ones, as he closed the lions' mouths when Daniel, later on, was flung into a den of them.

THE PROCESSION INTO THE ARK.

Let us take our place by the gang-plank of the Ark and witness this wonderful procession as it arrives. There never before was one like it in all this broad earth, and there never will be another such a gathering, in variety, magnitude and importance, world without end. The heavens are black, portentious, threatening. Not a leaf is rustling in all the forests. There is a dead calm and such an awful stillness that one can hear his own heart beat. The very clouds seem so freighted that they hang upon the tops of the trees as if waiting a signal. Noah and his sons and their wives have just gone into the Ark. Listen! Do you hear that muffled sound? It is not the roar of the coming tempest. There is a rustling of wings, there is a hissing and a trampling as of myriads of feet. We hear now the lowing of cattle, the bleating of sheep, and we are startled by the terrific roar of a lion. This commingling of sounds, such as no mortal ear ever heard before and will never hear

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[14] Gen. 8:3 and 5.

again grows momentarily more distinct. It is the breathing, trampling, crawling, flying, hopping and hissing of God's elect of all animal life on earth. A most momentous thing is about to happen. All life, not in this moving column, is shortly to perish, and to perish because of the wickedness of man. The head of the column is in sight. No human voice or arm is guiding it; yet it moves with the precision and steadiness of an army under a field-marshal. Noah whispers to his sons: "Here they come! they come! God has not forgotten me. My neighbors scoffed and jeered me and their ridicule cut me to the heart. But I remembered the promise of the Most High, and obeyed Him. My sons, God will never desert you if you put your trust in Him. Obey Him and fear not."

§ 4. The head of the column is now at the gang-plank. Here come the ponderous hippopotamus and his mate, laboring heavily, followed by some ugly-looking crocodiles.[15] Behind them crawl two monstrous boa-constrictors, and near them prance the horses, and they snort furiously, for they had just seen the boa swallow an ox. But the horses are safe, for the boa is drowsy and wants to sleep. Noah himself looks somewhat nervous, for he is but little familiar with the fauna of tropical America. Here are the elephants, the lamas from Peru, the camels, the zebras, the elks, the buffaloes, the cattle, the gnu and the tall giraffe from Africa. All these pon-

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[15] It has been claimed that the hippopotamus and the crocodile and boa constrictor families, together with the frogs, etc., did not go into the Ark. But amphibious animals could not live 300 days in water alone. Noah probably had a tank for them.

derous ones instinctively seek the lower floor of the Ark. These and thousands of others crowd in. The lion heads another division. The tiger, the wolf, the jaguar, the hyena, the leopard, the cat, the dog, the rat, the weasel, the opossum and skunk, the squirrel, the gopher and mouse, and tens of thousands of other animals from the frozen North and the tropical South all come crowding in.

THE APES.

But here is another division, headed by some curious objects so like unto men that Noah is about to drive them back. The leader bears a strong family resemblance to Noah's sons Shem, Ham and Japhet. Noah mentions this to them and Shem replies: "Yes, father, that is true, but his resemblance to you is even more striking than to us." Noah speaks to the leader and it chatters back to him. It has hands like a human and a face not unlike many. The legs of the chimpanzee, its arms and its hands were indeed so like Noah's that no wonder he was puzzled.

No man, except Noah and his sons, must enter that Ark; that is God's order; and here is the first case on record where evolution was decided and defied. Noah admitted the monkey, thus holding that it was *not his ancestor.* It was fortunate for the ape that Noah so decided, else he would have been turned back to perish with all others in the destroying flood.

The closing act of this panorama has arrived, for the flutter of wings announces the coming of the birds. The gaudy peacock is directing the flight, with the eagle close by. Here come the geese and the swans, the ducks and flamingos, the swallows and martins, the lap-wings and

the quails, the turkeys and turtle-doves, the sparrows and pigeons, the black-birds and wrens, with the crows and birds of paradise. Here also are the orioles and robins, and the bee-eaters and bitterns, followed by the great auk, from Labrador, with its small wings tired and worn, while the king-fisher skims along with ease. The owl opens his eyes drowsily and Polly says she wants a cracker. The raven and the dove were there, for Noah himself speaks of them. The nightingale, in her long flight across the Atlantic, is so worn and prosy that she sings no more sweetly than the unmusical blue-jay.

The line of the feathered tribe so lengthened out that it filled, completely, Noah's third story, except a small space in one corner for a cow which had been left, upon the urgency of Shem's wife, who wanted some milk for the baby.

The great gathering is over and the three doors of the Ark are closed. All animals and every creeping thing on earth, according to Genesis, are represented in that Ark. The windows of heaven are now opened "and all the fountains of the great deep are broken up." [16]

THE ARK TOO SMALL.

Such a world-renowned and wonderful story as that of the flood is naturally called in question. Here are a few of the objections which I find against it. The Ark is too small to hold a tenth part of the animals and their food for eight or ten months. It is, or must have been, a dark stenchy place. No windows, except a scuttle-hole

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[16] They have windows in heaven; but they had only *one* window in the Ark.—Gen. VII, 11.

in the roof. The animals were, therefore, enveloped in pitchy darkness. The filth of their stalls would be death-breeding. The poor animals could not be properly fed and cared for by three men, Shem, Ham and Japhet.

A man of Noah's age (six hundred years) could do but little. It would keep more than a thousand men busy, day and night, with plenty of light and air, to look after things.

The nights in that Ark were no darker than the days; for they had no lights; at least there is no mention of them. As to food, each animal would require the grasses and herbage of its locality. The flesh-eaters alone, in three-hundred days, would devour all the animals in the Ark. It will not do to say that God would feed them. He did not agree to do so. The animals came unto Noah, "for him to keep them alive." [17]

Nor will it do to say that, Noah *probably* made more than one door for each story, and one window for the roof. The Almighty told him just how to build that Ark; and if he failed to follow the plans, then he disobeyed. But, suppose the carnivora did not destroy all the cows, and goats, and sheep, while in the Ark. They are all turned loose, when the folks go ashore. What happens? The lions, hyenas, wolves, etc., feed upon the cattle and sheep and goats; and thus all this coming to Noah to save their lives, is frustrated. Moreover, the long months of water has killed all the grass and herbage; and the cattle, on leaving the Ark, found the earth a great, barren, leafless desert. There is not a seed for the birds, nor a

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[17] Genesis VI, 20.

bit of pasture for the flocks. But some pious soul, with more faith than reason, will say, "God could take care of all that." I can as well reply, that God could have destroyed all the world, except Noah and his family, and the elect animals, without all this trouble with the Ark.

NOAH'S DELUGE IS A COPY.

§ 5. But is not this whole thing a copy, somewhat extended and changed, from that old untrustworthy Babylonian mythical deluge story? Genesis is a Jewish narrative, and the Jews were notorious copyists and imitators; but they were also rhetoricians, and writers of high degree.

Athenian eloquence, in the space of three hundred years, was carried to such heights, that it has never yet been surpassed. Thus, also, Jewish writers from the time of Ezra, to the close of the four Gospels, a period of about six hundred and fifty years, completed a volume that, perhaps, for felicity of expression, and lofty imagery, will never be excelled. But often the Pegassus of the poet mounted beyond the cold facts.

The Babylonian deluge story was current in Babylon centuries before Ezra was carried there as a prisoner of war. That story had been copied by the Babylonians from the Accadians, so that we do not get it even second hand. The ancient world was, in fact, full of deluge stories. The Persians, however, changed the destroying deluge into the cold and killing frosts of winter. With the Persians, it was not because the "earth was filled with violence," that mankind was to be destroyed; but

because it was filled to "overflowing" with men and animals.[18]

The Persian romancer, instead of an Ark, is directed by Ahura Mazda (God) to build a great underground vara, an abode two miles square, with streets, and fountains of water; and is told that there will be a light, self-shining, within, to make that abode as light as an eternal day.[19] The frosts came, as did the flood, and killed all the people and animals not in the vara.

If the Genesis flood-story be true, it is a bad thing for those who trace their genealogy to Noah; for his conduct, later on, stamps him as a Bacchanalian. If the whole earth is, in truth, descended from the Ark people; then drunkenness is a strain and a stain in our blood. But why that old man, slobbering in his cups, had the power to curse Ham, and have that curse follow him and his posterity all these years, I confess myself unable to understand. Is it not more charitable to think it a mistake of the printer?

THE RAINBOW.

But is not the whole flood-story rendered extremely equivocal and uncertain by what is said about the rainbow?

Did the sun never shine while rain-drops were falling, before the flood-time? If it did, then, just so surely a rainbow was formed. Why then the statement, "I do

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[18] One thousand years or less; probably five hundred years will again fill the world to overflowing. What then? Is it a flood or a vara?

[19] See my introductory chapter on Zoroaster and his teachings, where this is fully set forth.

set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant" that all flesh shall not again be destroyed by a flood (Genesis IX, 9 to 17). The bow had been *"set"* long before the flood; and Noah must have often admired its beauty. When the first rain-drops fell through the first sunshine, then the bow was "set." It was, and is, the result of an established law, and that law will continue unchanged, just so long as raindrops fall through the atmosphere while the sun is shining.

Is it too much to assert, that if Manu's fish story had been written into Genesis, instead of that of Noah and his Ark, many devout and unquestioning souls would gulp it down as solid fact.

And there is not a bit of doubt that, if the Noah legend had been transcribed into the Sacred code of Manu, the foolish Hindoos would insist that it was an Sruti (revelation) from their God, Brahma.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE WORLD. THE PUNISHMENT OF THE WICKED.

§ 1. The Brahman and the Jewish Bibles both set forth that this world will be ultimately destroyed. And that a matter of such supreme importance may not be overlooked and forgotten, that statement is repeated again and again. Just where those writers obtained their information they do not state; but if they guessed at it, they are confirmed, some say, by modern science.

The Hindu Bible states that at the end of great periods of time, called Kalpas, the Lord will dissolve this material world. He does not burn it up; He simply dissolves it; or, as it were, He pulverizes it. Peter, after declaring that the world shall be burned up, falls back upon this old Hindu word and says, "all things shall be dissolved." (II Peter, ch. 3.)

All souls meanwhile, according to the Hindu Bible, lie in deep sleep until, at the Lord's convenience, He prepares another world.

If the soul be loaded with demerit, it is not flung into a furnace of fire to broil and burn for countless Kalpas, but is given another body and has another chance. It may see its error; it may reform, and be born into higher and higher grades, until perfect knowledge is reached,

and final release is found in Brahma (God). The pure in heart find peace at once.

The Brahmans believe that this process of creation, and destruction of the world, will go on in the future, as it has in the past; through endless Kalpas. That is, the body of man being dust, will be resolved back to dust. That the soul is an emanation from Brahma;[1] that it was pure before it went forth from him; and that it must be pure before it can return to him.

The hope and the struggle of the pious Hindu was to escape metempsychosis and become absorbed in Brahma. For unrepentant sinners, twenty-one hells were provided, by Yama, the Lord of Justice, where they were tossed about, in terrors and torments, "like to that of being bound and mangled."[2] But this did not happen until "another strong body" was given the evil doer, when, having suffered for his faults, the soul, purged of its stains, approached the Great One and Kshetragna (the Knower of the Field). These two, as judges, examine each soul that appears before them, and send it on a pilgrimage of transmigration, according to its merit or demerit.

Brahma, it is said, completely pervades all existences, with three controlling qualities: goodness, activity and

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[1] Is not this nearly tantamount to saying that wicked souls having forgotten that they emanated or came from God; and that they are a part of the integer or whole, will have to transmigrate from body to body until they recover their memory.

[2] Manu, ch. 4, § 87; Manu XII, § 75; Manu XII, §16 to 33. Lord of Justice, Manu, ch. 7, § 7.

darkness. That when a man feels a deep calm in his soul, he may know that the quality of goodness predominates. But if greed of gain and sensual objects lure him, he is marked with activity, and finds it difficult to tread the narrow path. Darkness has the form of ignorance; leads an evil life, and is ever covetous, unholy, and cruel.

Now if it be true that whatever the Lord first appointed to each soul, whether gentleness or ferocity, virtue or sin, truth or falsehood, and those qualities cling to it, spontaneously, then is it not also true that the Lord predestined some souls to tribulation and woe?[3] Wicked, marble-hearted old John Calvin would smack his lips with pleasure if he could know of this hateful Hindu creed. Yet, if we look about us, and confine our vision to man's life on earth (for that is all we know of it), we shall find representatives of Goodness, Activity and Darkness on every hand; each clinging tenaciously to its birthmark. Those endowed with supreme goodness have no struggle to become pure in heart; and with ease they reach "the state of the Gods."

Moreover, each of the three-fold classes of transmigration were further divided into three lesser grades. The doom of the worst soul in darkness was that it should inhabit the body of a fish, a rat, or snake, or insect. In the next grade above this, in darkness, the soul was sent into a barbarian, a lion or tiger; and the very highest grade that it could obtain, in that division, was as a hypocrite, a panderer, a snake deity, a liar, or a demon. The lowest of the order of Activity were drunkards, gamblers,

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[3] Chapter 32, Deut.

knaves, despicable wretches; and just above them in the same order were the disputations and those meddlesome tattlers, including unworthy priests and forked-tongued women.

Those panting for gain, avaricious souls, greedy, grasping, watching their treasures; those hell-born goblins; even those made up the highest ranks of Activity.

Goodness also had its degree, reaching up to the very throne. At the lowest round stood the hermits, ascetics, Brahmanas, and a class of deities who traveled in mid-air, called Vaimanikas. Next above these were the sages, the vedic deities, and the Manes.[4] Beyond these and above these, on the very pinnacle of goodness, without a stain, reposed Brahma, the Great One, the creator of the universe, beyond whom, nothing.

§ 2. It is certain that in this alleged final destruction of the world, the Hebrews were imitators and copyists. For that idea, when the book of Deuteronomy was *found,* had been prevalent in India from four hundred to six hundred years. Long enough surely for an idea, even though slow-footed, to travel from Punjab to Jerusalem. When then was this book of Deuteronomy found? For in that book (chapter 33) these remarkable words are written: "A fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn into the *lowest hell,* and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains." This is the first distinct enunciation found in the Bible that the earth shall be destroyed. And the word

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[4] These Manes were primeval deities, free from anger, loving purity, chaste, averse to strife, and endowed with great virtues. Manu 3:192.

"hell" is here first used in the Hebrew Bible. That awful catastrophy to the whole world is to take place, and all mankind are to perish because some wicked Hebrews had provoked the Almighty to anger by sacrificing unto devils and not to Him; and by their vanities and abominations.[5] This threat to consume the earth crept into the record in the following mysterious way: About six hundred and twenty-four years B. C., Hilkiah, the High Priest in Jerusalem, send word to Josiah, the King, that he had "found the book of the law (Deuteronomy) in the house of the Lord." It was surely the most remarkable "find" in all history.[6]

Moses had been in his grave about *eight hundred and twenty-seven years;* yet, during all that period, eventful to the Jews, there was no whisper that such a book as Deuteronomy was in existence. The reigns of David and Solomon preceded this "find" by more than three hundred years. Where was this wonderful book during all those centuries? We have only the bare, unsupported word of Hilkiah, the High Priest, about this matter; and all the circumstances are against him. A book hidden away eight hundred and twenty-seven years! the ink would fade, and the leaves would rot. In the dryest cli-

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[5] Chapter 32, Deut.

[6] Shakespeare agrees with the Hindus and thinks the earth will be dissolved.

"The cloud capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherits, shall dissolve,
And like this unsubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a wreck behind."

mates and with the best of care four hundred or five hundred years is the limit of the life of a book. This book was hidden; for *he found it.* If hidden it must have been put in some secret place, wrapped up; secreted; yet no other High Priest mentions it for eight hundred and twenty-seven years. There had been journeyings, and wanderings, and wars, and rebellions, and battles, and retreats, in those centuries. Deuteronomy during all this time was not *found* by any one. The Ark of the Covenant had been often moved; likewise the Mercy Seat, and tabernacles; yet, in all these frequent changes, Deuteronomy lay undiscovered. Moses had died, and the Lord had buried him in Moab; yet neither the Lord, nor Moses, said a word about this hidden record. Furthermore, after it is found, a strange thing happens. The King (Josiah) directs Hilkiah and others to enquire of the Lord about this newly-found wonder; and they visit Huldah, a prophetess and fortune-teller, living in Jerusalem, and she reports favorably, of course, and Deuteronomy becomes a "thus saith the Lord."[7] Another proof that Moses did not write this chapter in Deuteronomy, where the earth is threatened with destruction, is that it is poetry (blank verse), and Moses was not a poet. He was a stern law-giver. Yet, some of these verses have the rhythm of a Longfellow or an Emerson.

In that distant period, it is true that ideas traveled very slowly. But if Ezra was the last editor of the Old Testa-

[7] From a careful investigation of this matter, I think Hilkiah wrote the book, and lied about finding it. Ezra, probably, after the captivity, modified it somewhat. The copyright, however, belongs to Hilkiah.

ment, there was plenty of time for this notion about the destruction of the earth to be carried from Persia, and from India, to Babylon, to Jerusalem, and even west of the Adriatic. It was an idea of such magnitude, and terrible importance, that it was calculated to excite wonder and discussion among all classes. This much, we are certain, may be safely affirmed; that centuries before Hilkiah found Deuteronomy in the House of the Lord, the Hindoos had been teaching that the earth would be destroyed, and again reconstructed, and that this process would revolve continuously, like a wheel in perpetual motion.

§ 3. We hear nothing further in the Jewish Bible (and the New Testament was written by Jews) about the destruction of the world, until nearly seven hundred years after Hilkiah, when Peter declares that "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with a fervent heat, and the earth shall be burned up."

Peter also, in imitation of the Hindoos, declares that there shall be a day of judgment, and perdition, for the ungodly.[8] Paul chimes in with this, and says that Jesus will come in flaming fire, and "*take vengeance* on them that obey Him not; and will punish them with *everlasting* destruction."[9] Paul, copying from the Persian, or the Hindu Bible, or both, is specific about the happenings at

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[8] II Peter, ch. 3, v. 7 to 14. But Peter is a little cloudy about where the heavens and earth will pass to, when they pass away. Peter evidently did not know that matter is eternal, and cannot be annihilated.

[9] II Thessalonians, ch. 1. Paul does an injustice to

the final day. Manu says, each soul is examined as to its merit and guilt, and "obtains bliss or misery." That if "virtue and vice are found in a *small* degree, it *obtains bliss in heaven,* clothed with those very elements. But if it chiefly cleaves to vice, and in a small degree to virtue, it suffers the torments inflicted by Yama."[10]

Paul, with the imagination of the poet, is inclined to exaggeration. He therefore proclaims that the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout and with the trump of God. That the "righteous shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and be ever with him."[11]

Paul being a scholar, had no doubt learned of this Pagan doctrine; but, being also a Jew, his nature is naturally more fierce, and unrelenting, than the milder Hindu; and he threatens the wicked with vengeance, and everlasting destruction. "The Hindu punished the wicked with great severity, but his punishment was not everlasting. For when his term had expired, his soul was sent into some animal, and might, as we have seen, work its way upward towards supreme bliss." Even a mortal sin of the Hindu did not consign him to eternal flames.[12] Both of these punishments seem fearful to contemplate;

Jesus, about taking *vengeance* on the wicked; for Jesus was not a vengeful man. The genuineness of this epistle is questioned, but it is published as Gospel; therefore I quote it.

[10] Manu XII, 18 to 23: But Yama's torments were not eternal.

[11] I Thess. IV, v. 16 and 17, and II Thess., ch. 1, v. 8 and 9.

[12] Manu XII, 54.

but of the two, the Hindu is much less terrible than the Jewish, the penalties in both being much too severe for the offense. In short, they are so fiendish, that they are beyond *belief,* for they picture God as a demon, gloating over misery; and not as a "Lord very pitiful, and of tender mercy." (James V.)

Neither of these Bibles take into consideration the original difference in the construction of the human brain—the seat of the mind. But every one, no matter what his original gifts or curses may have been, must measure up to the same high standard, or suffer beyond expression.

Now, it is plain that some children are born with high moral faculties, and with none of that grasping greediness which wickedly covets the wealth of others. With destructiveness small, with benevolence large, such a child, grown to maturity, is filled with good works, and is as certain not to sink into a thief or robber, or murderer, as a June sunbeam is certain to bring forth the roses. Another child is born, perhaps the same hour, with his moral faculties sadly depressed; with destructiveness large; with covetousness abnormally developed. He is a *born thief* and *robber;* but he inherited those dangerous tendencies. They were born in him, and forever must be as a weight about his neck, pulling him down to dark and devious ways. They act as a perpetual loadstone drawing him continually towards the cess-pools of vice and crime. There was, and is, a gulf as deep and wide and impassable between these two persons, as between Dives and Lazarus. Yet, at the last assize-judgment day, if there be such a day, this child of sin must appear in spotless robes, or he is doomed, according to

Paul, to endless woe and suffering. Even the milder and more humane Hindu punishes such an one with great severity. Is there *even-handed justice in this?* Must this inherited wickedness "suffer" in that fire which shall never be quenched; where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched,[13] simply because certain parts of his brain were, without his making, small, where they ought to have been large, and excessive where they ought to have been small?

Is it not true that "just as the twig is bent, the tree inclines"? The one who bent the twig is to blame for the crooked tree. The tree is not to blame. The one who caused the crooked brains to thus grow; is he not to blame for the crooked acts which follow? It will not do to say that God will adjust all these matters on that final day. The record, if true, does not so state. Let us keep to the record or throw it aside. If God inspired Mark to write those awful words, then God puts Himself on a level with the demons; for demons can do no worse than to roast a man in unquenchable, everlasting flames.

Reader, the writers of the Hindu and the Hebrew Bibles, lived in times of ignorance, superstition and idolatry. Both Bibles make their Gods cruel, barbarous and *ungodly.* Let us believe the good things that are said about the Creator, but let us not believe with Mark and Manu, that God is a demon.

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[13] Mark IX, 45 and 46.





